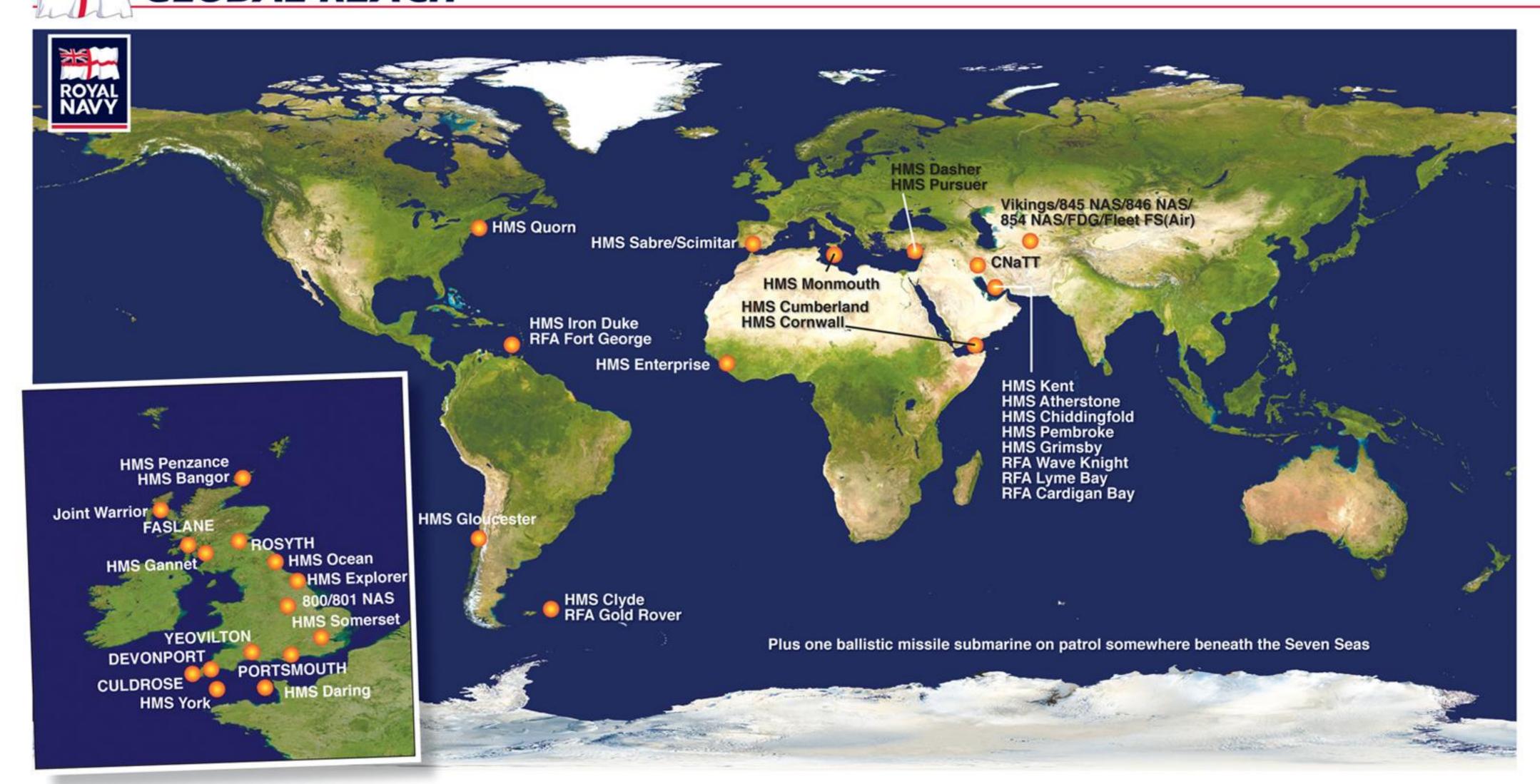


Picture: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow, HMS Illustrious

GLOBAL REACH



Fleet Focus

THIS month we've got a massive bust on page 3.

No, we're not going all The Sun on you.

The bust belongs to the men and women of Her Majesty's Ship Iron Duke who scored the biggest victory in the history of RN counter-narcotics patrols off the South American coast (see opposite).

Elsewhere, it's been a particularly busy month in home waters: flagship HMS Illustrious, protected by frigates Northumberland and Portland, led the RN involvement in the latest Joint Warrior exercise in the Hebrides, assisted by mine countermeasures vessels Shoreham, Penzance and Bangor, while HMS Trafalgar stalked beneath the waves (see pages 25-27).

HMS Argyll stopped off Bute to pay a farewell to islanders

before the frigate entered refit at Rosyth (see page 15). On the east coast, HMS Ocean dropped in on her affiliated city of Sunderland during exercises with Army Air Corps Apache gunships - paying their first visit to the carrier in five years (see

page 8). Farther south, HMS Somerset negotiated the Thames to take part in the DSEI defence exhibition in the capital, before her sailors called in on her namesake county to say 'hello' to old

friends (see page 8). HMS Daring has been forging links with new friends in Birmingham and Guernsey (see page 15) as well as helping **HMS York** through the rigmarole of FOST (see right).

Ark Royal has completed her first spell of trials following her

overhaul in Portsmouth (see page 4).

University boat HMS Explorer helped yachtsmen begin their round-the-world race in Hull (see page 10).

Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines hosted their US

Marine Corps counterparts FAST for some anti-piracy/boarding operations training in Scotland (see page 7). The sacrifices made by their fellow green berets since 2000 have been recognised with a Memorial Wall dedicated at CTCRM Lympstone, while aviators remembered the pioneers of naval

flight at RNAS Yeovilton and the ship's companies of Penzance and Bangor paid their respects to the dead of HMS Royal Oak, 70 years after the battleship's loss (see page 13). HMS Echo has completed an 18-month survey mission east of Suez and returned to Devonport (see page 5), while heading in the opposite direction are HM Ships Monmouth and Lancaster

(see page 4). The former takes over from HMS Kent in the Gulf (see right); the latter is taking up the fight against pirates... ...a task currently conducted by sisters Cumberland and Cornwall. The Fighting 99 gives us an insight into her most

recent operations (see pages 20-21). **HMS Quorn** continues to enjoy her rare foray across the

Atlantic, working with the US Navy off the Eastern Seaboard (see page 4). In the land of the deeps, HMS Triumph conducted a basin

dive in Devonport (see page 9) as she begins to emerge from a mammoth refit, while HMS Astute has powered up her nuclear reactor for the first time (see page 24). In foreign skies, the men and women of the Commando

in Afghanistan. The work of the Baggers has been greatly aided by their Sea King brethren in **771 NAS**. We highlight the expanded role of the

Helicopter Force and 854 NAS continue to support operations

SAR squadron (see page 18). CHF and 854 have now been joined in Helmand by the bomb disposal experts of the Fleet Diving Group (see page 6).

And finally, happy 30th birthday to the Jetstream, stalwart of observer training with 750 NAS. As the venerable aircraft celebrated its milestone, its successor was unveiled at Culdrose (see page 10).



The first and the last

THE first is Her Majesty's Ship Daring (on the left), lead ship of the new Type 45s.

The last is Her Majesty's Ship York, the final of 12

Type 42 destroyers to hoist the White Ensign. The pair met off Plymouth as the Type 45 returned home from trials in the Channel, while York was right

in the middle of a Thursday War with FOST.

York might be a child of the Eighties (she was laid down just 18 days into that decade) rather than a child of the Noughties, but there's at least a couple of advantages she enjoys over the next-generation warship.

For a start, she can outrun her. The 'fastest 42 around' (York's unofficial tag line) can make 35kts at a push; Daring's top speed is about 30kts.

And she's got a working missile system too in Sea Dart (the Type 45's Sea Viper won't be tested for real until next year).

The White Rose warship was part-way through the trials and tribulations of Operational Sea Training (Daring has to wait until next year for that pleasure) as she gears up for a South Atlantic deployment.

For the nine-week duration of OST, York's flying the flag for Brownia, safeguarding the fictitious country from the dastardly Ginger (unlike Joint Warrior in Scotland where Caledonia and Dragonia have supplanted the traditional foes - see page 25).

OST started gently (ish) with checks and tests to make sure a ship's company are ready for the Flag Officer Sea Training experience, then became increasingly challenging: machinery breakdowns, replenishment at sea, fires, air attacks, submarine hunts and the like.

At the half-way stage the sailors moved ashore for a day at Bull Point to practise disaster relief before returning to the ship for what older Navy News readers will remember as Operation Awkward: dealing with intruders.

York came alongside to host peace talks between the two warring nations... only to come under attack from armed protestors on the Devonport jetty.

And if that wasn't enough there was also the 'Nottingham scenario' to contend with (not at the same time as the protestors mercifully). As the name implies, it involves lots of flooding caused by running aground... as the namesake Type 42 did off Australia seven years ago.

The last act of OST was a final inspection for York right about the time this month's paper hit the presses.

After that she returns home to Portsmouth to prepare for her deployment to the Falklands, relieving her sister HMS Gloucester (see below).

■ Civic ceremonies for Daring, page 15

G's getting warmer in (

WITH the austral spring now upon us, HMS Gloucester has bidden farewell to the South Atlantic... and bidden hello to the South Pacific.

Winter abates reluctantly in these parts, however: the weather around Cape Horn was far too treacherous for the Fighting G to attempt that passage, so she plumped for the Patagonian Canals and Magellan Strait - three days of negotiating 800 miles of narrow, but stunning, waterways.

"It was really breathtaking, the scenery was like nothing any of us had seen before, spectacular high mountains with glaciers; completely deserted," said AB(Sea) Max Grosse.

"I was at the wheel driving as we passed through the Paso Tortuoso, which is barely wider than the ship, not something that I will forget."

On the second morning, Gloucester closed up as

she passed through the appropriately-named Canal Icy, littered with small icebergs which broke off the glaciers towering above the waters on both sides.

The sagacity of the decision not to round Cape Horn was demonstrated as the Type 42 emerged from the canals into a Pacific storm which whipped the sea into a frenzy.

So the destroyer's arrival in the great Chilean port of Valparaiso was all the more welcome.

There the sailors not only made the most of Chilean hospitality, enjoying diving, skiing, sky diving and various sporting fixtures, but they also helped out at Escuela Gran Bretaña, a school for children with learning difficulties.

The building was in a poor material state, so 15 sailors arrived armed with huge buckets of paint to leave the main play area a nice shade of apricot.

Taste of Kent for politicians

FOUR politicians joined HMS Kent in the Gulf so they could better understand the daily workings of a British warship on deployment.

The quartet - Baroness Fookes of Plymouth, Lord Young of Norwood Green, Gisela Stuart (MP for Birmingham Edgbaston) and David Hamilton (MP for Midlothian) - sailed with the frigate from Bahrain as part of the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme.

Kent is in the latter stages of her deployment to the Northern Arabian Gulf, helping to safeguard Iraq's oil terminals and bring general stability to the region's waters.

The politicians were treated to the full gamut of Kent's activities: from observing the ship's company at action stations and fending off a (mock) attack by a speedboat to flood and fire exercises (the latter accompanied by plenty of training smoke).

After that, they were given tours of the ship by each department to give them an understanding of how complex a Type 23 is.

The tours were punctuated by discussions with the ship's company from the most junior able seamen, through senior rates up to CO Cdr Simon Hopper.

Jack's not known for being backward in coming forward and Kent's ship's company did raise a number of issues with the visitors: the administration software JPA, uniforms in hot-weather climates, and the public's appreciation of the RN's role around the world.

After two nights aboard Kent, the politicians were transferred by boat to RFA Lyme Bay which is serving as the mother ship for four RN minehunters in the Gulf.

"I don't think the members of both Houses of Parliament could have chosen a better platform from which to gain such valuable experience," said Cdr Hopper.

"My ship's company enjoyed frank and honest discussion with our visitors on a multitude of subjects."



Anatomy of a drugs bust

£240m of Class A drugs will never reach these shores - or any others - thanks to the biggest victory in the history of counter-narcotics patrols by the Royal Navy.

The combined efforts of HMS Iron Duke, her Lynx, support ship RFA Fort George and a US Coast Guard boarding team bagged 5½ tonnes of cocaine off the South American coast.

The victim was the MV Cristal, a battered 138ft fishing boat ploughing a well-worn traffickers route.

But don't take our word for it. Take the word of the team aboard the Type 23 frigate (for very good security reasons, the names have been changed to protect their identities – apart from the CO).

"The day started as pretty much any other day on drugs patrol," said Mne Andy Brady, one of the Royal Marines maritime sniper team from Fleet Protection Group RM. "I and the lance corporal were briefed for flying so we were ready to deploy at 15 minutes notice should any suspicious vessels present themselves.

"The pilot and flight commander had all the preflight checks to do while I and the L/Cpl prepped the weapons and ammunition which could well be needed for a potential takedown. We then launched in search of what would later become

known to us as the MV Cristal." When the 815 NAS Lynx arrived over the Cristal, its crew found "a large fishing vessel in quite a state of disrepair with a crew that didn't in the slightest seem occupied with something as mundane as fishing," says Mne Brady.

"As our armed-to-the-teeth helicopter hovered alongside, one Cristal crew member didn't even feel the need to move from his hammock. This vessel was obviously suspicious, so we followed procedure for boarding."

And that meant bringing up 4,000 tonnes of sleek grey messenger of death. Iron Duke closed in on the Cristal and was given permission to board.

With the Lynx covering the fishing vessel, the sea boats were launched with the US Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) embarked to conduct a search.

During the initial search bales were found in one of the ballast tanks through a small access cover; samples tested by the Coast Guards proved to be cocaine. This triggered a more extensive search: to recover the drugs already found and to see if there were any more hidden in any of the other ballast tanks.

The second-in-command of Iron Duke's boarding team, PO Dickie Davies, was one of the first to go over:

"I was tasked with providing cover for the detainees while the LEDET began their search. Two of us got kitted up and were put in the sea boat to make our way about 1,000 yards from the ship to the MV Cristal's location - she was still being driven by her crew. Before our arrival, the crew had been compliant and were allowed to move freely about the ship.

"As the team started a systematic search of the vessel - emptying tanks and opening lockers around the ship - nothing was found and by midnight (five hours into the boarding) fatigue was setting in, so we grabbed a Mars bar and had a huddle to decide our next plan of action.

"As the team looked at the ship's drawing, the dimension of the bilges and tanks weren't adding up, so the LEDET looked into the hold which was filled with crates of drinks.

"In 90°F heat the team shifted the crates to gain access to the wooden decking. After removing it,

a dry bilge was discovered that had not been used for some time. There were also some tanks lids that had been removed recently.

"When sealed bags which looked like bales of cocaine were discovered, we stepped up our observation of the crew - they knew that once the drugs were discovered the game was up.

"We kept an eye on the captain and his first mate; the former started crying and wandering around the ship. This was about 4.30am - some 12

hours after we first boarded the MV Cristal. At first light - after we had searched the rest of the ship - it was our turn to get our heads down.'

Hidden in the ballast tanks under a layer of concrete were 212 separate bales of cocaine weighing approximately 26kg each. Totalling around 51/2 tonnes, this was the largest seizure of cocaine in RN history and although its destination was unknown, had it reached the UK it would have been worth £240 million pounds - quite something for a boat that had 'no

drugs' stencilled on the side... With the search of the Cristal well under way, Iron Duke conducted a RAS with RFA Fort George to provide a welcome top up of fuel for the Iron Duke.

For the next few days, the frigate escorted the Cristal but it became increasingly apparent that she was in a poor state of repair, breaking down repeatedly, finally losing all power; she could not

be restarted. The decision was taken that she was a hazard to shipping and the ship was directed to sink her. Iron Duke brought the Cristal alongside to embark the detained crew and the narcotics under the custody of the US LEDET.

With one of the most unusual 'Clear Lower Deck - Store Ship' you will ever see, almost the entire

ship's company got stuck in to bring those 51/2 tonnes of cocaine on board in little more than half an hour.

And now the Lynx and gunners took centre stage. First the maritime sniper team was given the chance to use its weapons against a live target before the ship's company fired up the guns.

"We launched with 600 rounds of 12.7mm link for my beast of a machine gun (the M3M) and armour piercing 0.5inch rounds for the L/Cpl's AW50 sniper rifle," said Mne Brady.

"Equipped with his deadly Mk3 eyeball, he landed precise sniper fire on to the Cristal causing her some damage.

"It was now the M3M's turn. I loaded up the .5 and began raining down lead from overhead. It lit her up like Christmas had come early. A beautiful sight and we were well pleased to do our bit for the safety of any container ships passing through the area.

"Once our rounds were expended we sat off the Cristal to enjoy the rest of the show: Iron Duke had some 4.5inch and 30mm rounds to finish the job of sending her to the depths which proved to be more than enough. The job was complete and our team were left extremely proud to have played a part in what showed to be the largest drugs bust in naval history.'

Cristal was Iron Duke's third bust in as many months – and by far the most significant.

"This is our job and we are good at it," said CO Cdr Andrew Stacey proudly. "This bust surpasses anything we've had - and anything the Navy has

"It's the largest drug bust by value and volume in terms of cocaine. It is a massive blow for the narcotics industry."

The ship continues her anti-drugs/support to the Caribbean patrol for another month before returning to Portsmouth in time for Christmas.











GLOBAL REACH

Quorn deals with the peril of Beryl

SHE is 133 times smaller and her ship's company is 126 times less numerous.

But there are things HMS Quorn can do that one of the most potent warships on the Seven Seas, USS Harry S Truman, cannot.

One is open a tinny at sea. Another – rather more importantly – is the ability to track down and destroy mines.

The Hunt-class warship is roughly half-way through a five-month deployment with a NATO minehunting force – a deployment which has, unusually, taken the group across the Pond.

September found Quorn in New York for the city's 9/11 commemorations.

Last month saw the Portsmouth-based warship exercising with the Truman as part of the Americans' JTFX war games (a sort of version of our Joint Warrior exercises).

The Truman battlegroup was working up off Virginia.

Quorn was charged – perhaps understandably – with clearing a safe passage for the leviathan through the (fictitious) Beryl Strait.

The RN vessel successfully recovered five mines during the 'free play' phase of the exercise.

"The Joint Task Force Exercise with the US Navy was a superb proving ground for us ahead of live operations with the NATO group when we return to European waters," said Quorn's CO Lt Cdr Tim Neild.

After JTFX, Quorn put in to Norfolk, Virginia, where she was visited by CINC Fleet, Admiral Sir Trevor Soar, who's touring the Fleet as he settles into his new job.

Admiral Soar's command brings with it important NATO duties at his Northwood HQ, so he also called on the task group's flagship, Denmark's HDMS Thetis, and addressed a parade of sailors from across the NATO group, complimenting them on their achievements to date.

"I know the whole team were lifted by his words of praise for the job we are doing within the group," said Lt Cdr Neild.

After more exercising off the Eastern Seaboard, working with the Canadians, Quorn is returning to more usual European waters via Bermuda, where there's some historic ordnance to dispose of.

For FOST get HOST

THE strange waters of the Antarctic beckon for HMS Scott as she steps into the void left by HMS Endurance's accident last year.

And to that end, the survey ship has undergone four weeks of rigorous training: Hydrographic Operational Sea Training, or HOST.

HOST comprises one week of harbour training followed by three weeks at sea training.

It's like its FOST counterpart BOST (B is for Basic), but with a lesser emphasis on fighting a war.

But that doesn't mean there's no war: indeed, Scott's ship's company are expected to be able to defend themselves (and their ship) and perform force protection duties – a particular challenge as there are 42 sailors on a ship the size of HMS Fearless.

The FOSTies also throw in other little treats such as salvage missions, disaster relief exercises and helicopter crashes on deck.

The final test – as for ships passing through BOST – is a Thursday war: Scott sailed into a full-blown conflict and was charged with aiding a stricken vessel.

While steaming at full speed towards the casualty, the survey ship became the casualty of a (simulated) collision.

AWE from Ark

NOW here's a rare sight.

No, not a beautiful autumnal day on the South Coast but HMS Ark Royal – "the best ship in the world" (not our words, but those of one of the sailors aboard...) – returning to sea for the first time since February.

Ark successfully completed a two-week package of trials to shake off the cobwebs following a £12m overhaul in Portsmouth. It's the first step down a long road which will eventually see Ark take over from 'the other ship' (aka HMS Illustrious) as the nation's flagship and strike carrier.

For the past few years she's been used as a second HMS Ocean, serving as a helicopter assault ship and platform for Royal Marines rather than jump jets.

All that changes when Lusty goes into refit in the new year. Britain needs a floating launchpad for Harriers, so Ark Royal has been converted back to her original role, plus received some TLC at the same time.

New 'intersleek' paint was applied to her hull during the revamp (boffins reckon the paint will make her scythe through the waves a couple of knots faster and cut the carrier's fuel bill by nine per cent) while the engines received an overhaul and new computer systems were installed.

First up was a series of weapons/marine engineering and aviation trials over a fortnight off Plymouth.

Chinooks, Sea Kings and Lynxes – but no Harriers yet, they're at sea with Illustrious presently – all set down on the flight deck (and subsequently took off again) as part of the ship's 'air acceptance trials'.

The Phalanx chain gun, Minigun and GPMGs all fired live rounds creating, says Commander Weapon Engineering Cdr Dan Ferris, "a real buzz among the ship's company".

As for the ME department, well Ark successfully sailed around

for two weeks, didn't she?

"There are few sights quite as awe-inspiring as seeing an aircraft carrier thundering through the high seas at full speed, powered by four Rolls-Royce Olympus engines, driving two mighty shafts through a David Brown gearbox – of Aston Martin," enthused Cdr Paul Carroll, Cdr Marine Engineering.

"Ark's already proven that she remains as swift and nimble as ever. That's generated enormous pride throughout the marine engineers who've lovingly and painstakingly improved and repaired the ship."

As well as a million and one trials, Ark hosted 40 cadets from BRNC Dartmouth as part of the new-look training for future officers (see the 2-6 pages for more details).

The tranche of cadets includes rookie officers from foreign navies, among them OC Omar Al Ismaili of the Royal Omani Navy. "It's a great opportunity for me to be trained in the best ship in the world. I will forever remember my time in HMS Ark Royal."

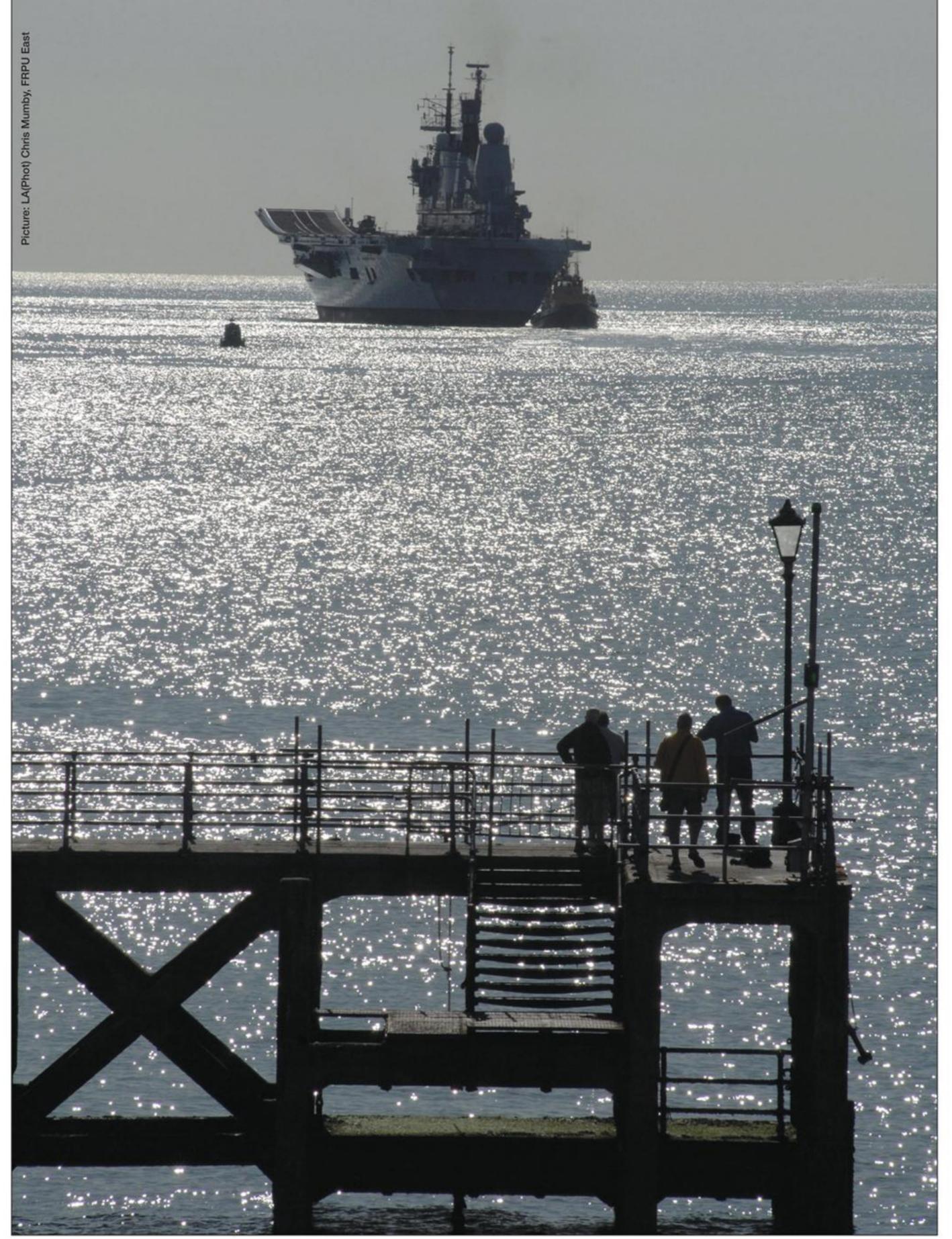
And if he doesn't remember, TV will help refresh his memory. Historian and TV presenter Dan Snow joined the ship to record yet more footage for his impending multi-part documentary on the RN past and present, *Masters of the Sea*. It's due to be screened by the Beeb early in 2010.

Dan witnessed, says Ark's CO Capt John Clink, a ship's company "who have worked relentlessly to get the ship back to sea.

"I recognise that our seven months in Portsmouth have been hard work, but Ark Royal is now faster, leaner, and greener – and looking forward to taking her place at the vanguard of the Fleet."

Now back in Portsmouth, she's preparing for more extensive sea trials and Operational Sea Training ahead of assuming flag duties in 2010 and deploying to the USA as part of the Auriga 10 deployment.

■ 'The other ship' leads Joint Warrior, pages 25-27





Red Rose is fired up

ANOTHER month, another blast of a Seawolf from the silo of a Type 23 frigate.

This time it's **HMS Lancaster** testing her primary air defence system before she deployed.

The year opened for Lancaster somewheres east of

And it ends there too for the Red Rose warship, although this time she's chasing down

pirates rather than protecting Iraq's oil platforms.

The last act before deploying was bespoke training from FOST to meet the demands of the impending piracy patrol and

an obligatory firing of Seawolf

against a towed target in UK

exercise ranges.

So fast did it burst from its silo, that the man behind the lens (CPO(ET) Lynch) couldn't quite get the entire missile in his camera frame.

The 'Queen's own ship'
(Her Majesty is the Duke of
Lancaster for whom the Type
23 is named) will take over from
HMS Cumberland off the Horn
of Africa attempting to stifle
attempts by Somali pirates to
hijack ships.

"Since April, Lancaster's undertaken a busy regeneration process and I've been proud of the manner in which my sailors have risen to the challenge," said Commanding Officer Cdr Rory Bryan.

Commander Maritime
Operations Rear Admiral Mark
Anderson dropped in on the
ship's company before their
departure, while the Band of
the Adjutant General's Corps
will provide suitable musical
accompaniment as Lancaster
deployed from Portsmouth.

Another Type 23 already well on her way to the Middle East is the Black Duke.

HMS Monmouth won't see Devonport again until spring 2010 after sailing to relieve her sister HMS Kent in the Northern Arabian Gulf.

The first half of 2009 was pretty arduous for the ship as she was brought back to life following a refit, culminating in Operational Sea Training where the ship's company were praised for their enthusiasm and willingness to learn.

Before leaving the West Country, the sailors treated loved ones to a families' day to give them an idea of what goes on aboard the frigate on a daily basis.

Mine goes with bang

EXPERTS from the Southern Diving Group blew up a wartime mine off the Dorset coast.

Commercial divers found the unexploded ordnance lying in 70ft of water about a mile off Swanage, near Ballard Point.

They called in the experts – in this case RN frogmen from Devonport.

The latter determined the weapon was an air-dropped German ground mine containing 300kg of high explosive

Upon detonation by the divers, it created a spectacular plume of water upwards of 200ft high.

Divers gear up for Afghan mission, page 6

GLOBAL REACH



Report slams procurement overspending

WHITEHALL suffers from an endemic failure to control the cost of buying new kit, a highlycritical independent report warns.

Former government adviser Bernard Gray says both the MOD and the public have become inured to a seemingly endless stream of reports about military projects which are years late and millions over budget.

Mr Gray, who was commissioned by the MOD to look into the deep-seated problem, says "the problems, and the sums of money involved, have almost lost their power to shock, so endemic is the issue, and so routine the headlines."

He adds: "The issue is a mystery, wrapped in an enigma, shrouded in an acronym."

On average, major projects are five years overdue and around £300m over budget.

Of expensive and delayed naval projects, the former MOD adviser focuses on the Type 45 destroyer - "indeed a mighty and impressive ship".

Thanks to various cancelled or stalled initiatives, the replacement for the aged Type 42 destroyers is some two decades late.

"Had we been tasked with a Falklands-style mission during the past 20 years, we would have risked significant casualties, the very significant costs of acquiring adequate equipment at short notice or the embarrassment of not fighting at all," Mr Gray says.

"Our blushes have in part been spared by the fact that we have not been called upon in recent years to fight the kind of campaigns that have required the services of some of our most expensive and delayed weapons systems."

The 300-page report, Review of Acquisition, says part of the problem is the constant in-fighting between the three Services for funds.

But Mr Gray also points out that the military of the USA, France and Australia also suffer from almost identical problems when it comes to acquiring new equipment.

"Bernard and his team have done a thorough job," said Lord Drayson, minister for strategic defence acquisition reform.

"They have come up with a strong package of measures to ensure the right equipment is delivered in the most efficient

"Quite simply, we accept most of his recommendations and are getting on with implementing them alongside broader work to develop a future strategy for defence acquisition, which will ensure we deliver as effectively as possible the equipment the Armed Forces need."

Australia for 847 NAS...

...SADLY the shield, not the country - but it is one of the highest honours in the Fleet Air Arm nevertheless.

Fliers and ground crew with 847 Naval Air Squadron were awarded the coveted Australia Shield for supporting relentless operational demands.

Over nine months in 2009, half the Yeovilton-based Lynx squadron has been deployed in Afghanistan in support of the Allied mission, clocking up around 250 flying hours per

month. On top of that it has been charged with duties at home and abroad (such as taking part in the Taurus deployment to the Far East); there was a four-week period this year when virtually the entire unit was deployed in one or other overseas location.

In both Afghanistan and the jungles of Malaysia and Brunei, 847's engineers maintained a remarkable level of serviceability.

The result is the award of the shield, presented to the FAA unit which maintains the highest level of operational efficiency.

Say hello to Echo

A HEARTY wave from loved ones at Devil's Point as the good ship Echo sees home for the first time in 18 months.

The multi-role survey ship arrived back in weather even finer than when she departed Devonport - not bad for an autumn day in the West Country.

Now we did say when she left that the people of Plymouth wouldn't seen Echo again until after the Olympics.

Admittedly, we expected it to be the London games... rather than those in Beijing.

But after 18 months away, top brass decided the ship could fulfil her training and operational requirements in a more cost-effective way by coming home and then redeploying (she's due for more tasking in the new year).

And let's face it, an 18-month deployment is

exceedingly long by modern RN standards.

Most of those 18 months were spent in the Far East - the survey ship made Singapore her second home, paying no fewer than a dozen visits to the Commonwealth metropolis.

There were also visits to Brunei (supporting the Taurus 09 amphibious task group), Hong Kong, South Korea and Bangladesh; Echo was the first RN visitor to the latter in 12 years.

She joined more than 40 warships from across the globe at the Indonesian Navy's Fleet Review off the island of Sulawesi and also took part in the South Korean Review.

More typically, however, the ship conducted survey work (or MDG as it's known these days apparently military data gathering). She clocked up 76,000 nautical miles (three times around the Equator) on her travels during 380 days at sea.

And aside from fostering good relations with the various foreign navies - such as the survey branch of the Indonesian Navy - they worked with, the ship's company paid their respects at numerous war memorials which are scattered around the region.

"We maintained a continuous RN presence in the Far East for nearly 18 months, gathering data in demanding environmental conditions, often a long distance from shore support," said Lt Cdr Derek Rae, Echo's XO.

"To achieve that required team work from the whole ship's company. They can be justifiably proud of what we have achieved."

A rotation system, with one third of Echo's ship's company home on leave or on courses, ensured her demanding workload could be upheld.

Picture: LA(Phot) Alex Cave, FRPU West



We are not looking for praise...'

FROM the sun to the rain.

There was no bright blue sky to welcome 80 sailors from 1st Mine Countermeasures Squadron back from the Gulf, only dreary Scottish drizzle.

After seven months in charge of HM Ships Pembroke and Grimsby, Crews 1 and 5 touched down at Prestwick Airport near Ayr to bring the latest phase of the mine warfare tour-of-duty in the Gulf to a

The two Faslane-based warships are on long-term deployment to Bahrain, with the crews of all eight Sandowns being rotated through the duo to sustain operations in the region.

Now back on the Clyde, the returning sailors have taken over HM Ships Shoreham and Walney, where they were visited by Captain Faslane Flotilla, Capt Andy McKendrick, who praised their accomplishments.

"These two ship's companies have been deployed on operations for six months and whilst flying home is undoubtedly quick it denies them the occasion that all sailors enjoy when they bring their ships into their home port in front of families and friends," said Capt McKendrick.

"They have been operating in demanding conditions requiring absolute professionalism and I applaud their success."

Lt Cdr Anthony Crabb, CO of the crew which took over Pembroke, said his sailors had faced "an enormous challenge".

He continued: "Mine hunters are highly-sophisticated ships and the heat, sand and intensity of operations meant that everyone had to be at the very top of their game.

"The crew were always on the go throughout the deployment maintaining the ship and had no break. They were sometimes working in 40°C or 50°C.

"Their training and pride in their work kept them focused on the task at hand, making the deployment such a success."

Over and above the mechanical and technological challenge of keeping the vessels running, there was also the essential task of keeping the crew motivated.

"In many ways this is the tricky part," explained Lt Cdr Marcus Jacques, who commanded HMS Grimsby during the deployment.

"Without the right people the ships are useless. We tried our hardest to maintain a balanced programme for the crews. We varied the work they did, gave them downtime when we could and created goals for them to work towards." "However, what worked most in the deployment's favour was the

first-class training the crews receive. "One thing you learn visiting other ports and other navies is that

the Royal Navy training is the envy of the world."

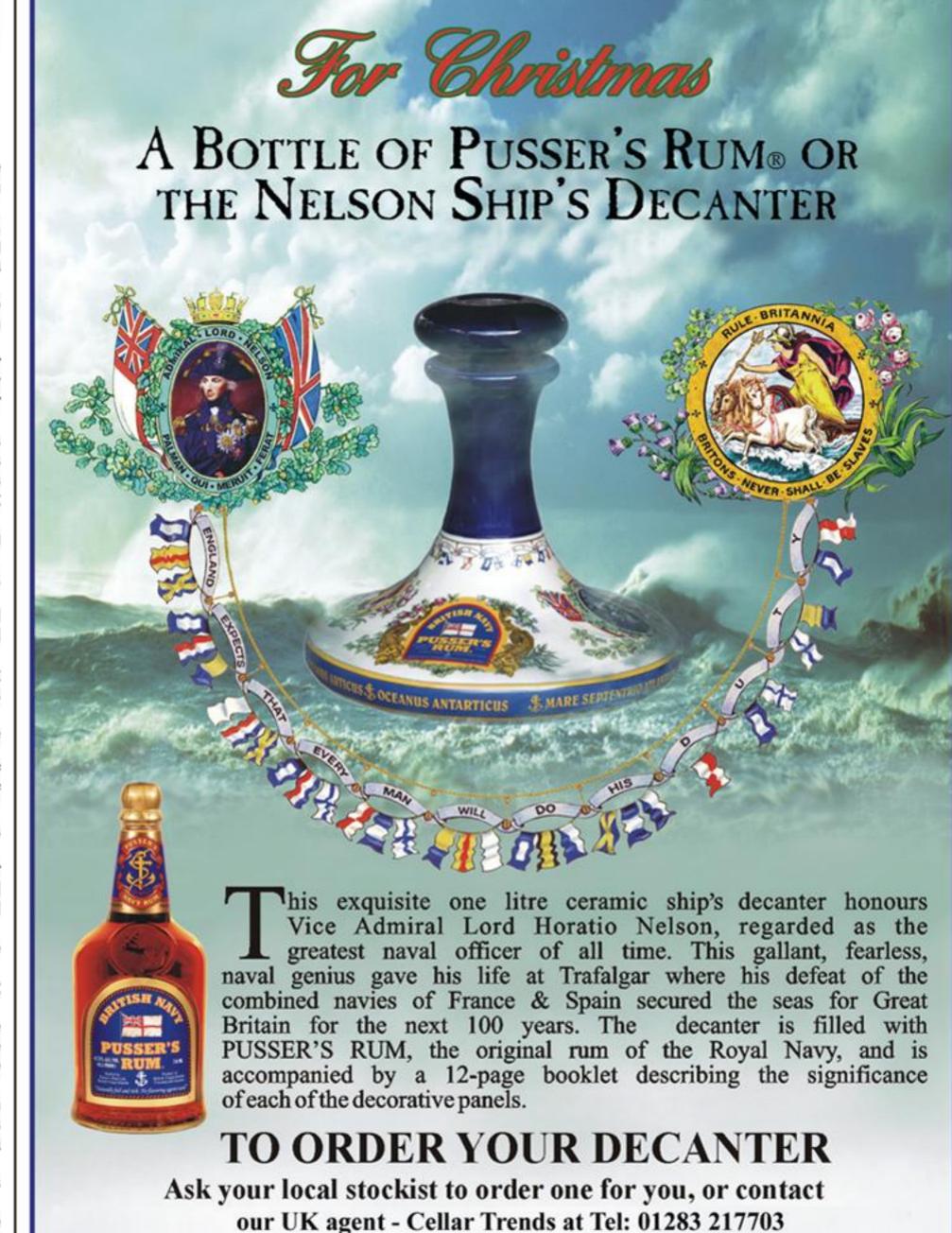
Lt Cdr Crabb said it was vital that the rest of the RN - and the wider public - understood the efforts made by the minehunting force in the Gulf (aside from the two Sandowns, two Hunt-class ships are based in Bahrain: Atherstone and Chiddingfold).

"Every day we see troops who are in the Gulf or taking part in operations in Afghanistan on the news or in the papers. There is no doubt that they are heroes, working in a harsh environment on a difficult and perilous job," the officer added.

"The Royal Navy does its part too, supporting these big operations

and making them possible.

"We are not looking for homecoming parades of praise, but the dedicated crews working for MCM1 certainly deserve recognition. They are the hardest working crews in the Fleet."



• The pioneering Royal Navy EOD team at Horsea Island as they prepared to deploy to Afghanistan; from left, AB(D) Les Cockerton, LS(D) Ian 'Higgy' Higgins, PO(D) Jai 'Digger' Gardner and AB(D) Chris 'Jumper' Collins. Pictured below: Another example of Navy divers working ashore – CPO(D) Smith and LS(D) Jacobs, of Fleet Diving Unit 3, take a break near Basra before the British drawdown in southern Iraq

FROM the deep to the desert – the first Royal Navy bomb disposal team has deployed to Helmand Province in Afghanistan.

The four divers

- PO Jai 'Digger'
Gardner, LS Ian
'Higgy' Higgins, and
ABs Chris 'Jumper'

the nearest coast.

Collins and Les Cockerton

– have been picked to lead the
way by working as specialists
alongside the Army on the front
line, more than 400 miles from

The Navy team will work out of Forward Operating Bases (FOBs), joining soldiers on patrol and operations, and they will be expected to clear any unexploded ordnance which gets in the way.

Normally that will be failed munitions such as bombs, mortars, grenades and the like, from both Coalition and Taleban forces.

In addition they can also be called on to make safe terrorists' IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) to ensure the patrol achieves its objectives, although specialist Army teams will normally deal with these.

"If we come across something really new we will call for the Army IED disposal experts and then stand back to allow them to maximise the forensics from it," said Digger.

"There is no value in us just going in and trying to blow everything up when there could be something that might lead to the capture of the bombers who made the devices."

The four men belong to the Fleet Diving Squadron (FDS), part of the Fleet Diving Group (FDG), which underwent a radical reorganisation a year ago.

There were three FDG units.

FDU 1 supports
Special Forces, FDU
2 conducted 'Very
Shallow Water' mine
countermeasures in
support of amphibious
forces, and FDU 3
had a worldwide
remit to identify
and examine new
devices and for deep

diving operations.

The second and third units have now merged, creating a multi-skilled rapid response force of 28 men.

This has also allowed for the creation of RN Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams in support of the Counter IED task group for Operation Herrick, the first of which deployed at the beginning of last month for six months.

The second team is already well into a six-month training programme.

There are eight conventional EOD teams – seven Army and one RN – and eight IED disposal teams (all Army) operating in Afghanistan for Op Herrick 11.

The RAF is expected to provide a similar team for the subsequent roulement, moving the Armydominated operation slightly closer to the ideal of a Joint Service EOD Group.

Cdr Peter Greenwood, the CO of the FDS, said: "These are the first RN EOD operators to operate in Afghanistan, and although we have operated from the COB in Basra in Iraq for the past two years, Helmand is a completely different environment, more intensive and a higher level of threat.

"They have to be as good on the ground as soldiers – competent with personal weapons and how to operate as war fighters on a patrol, as well as keeping a cool head to deal with ordnance that the squad encounters – and they have risen to that challenge.

"This is a big day for the



Clearance Diving branch – it's a significant increase in our capabilities and the Joint Service EOD community are delighted in the way that we have pulled this team together and that we will continue to support them in Afghanistan as the Army don't have enough operators to do this on their own."

The men are under no illusions about the task they face in Helmand.

"The difference between this and what we have all done, make no bones about it, is that this is a real shooting war and we are going to be in the middle of it, particularly when out on patrol," said Digger.

"We have done training with the Army, and the only thing they have got over us is more experience."

The work is very different to their role with the FDS, but that in itself makes it interesting. "Our normal work with FDU 2 would usually have been in support

of Very Shallow Water mine countermeasures," said Higgy. "We were deployed a lot in places like Norway, Scotland, Turkey, France, the Gulf and even to Hawaii. "Anything that goes bang we

dealt with, either exercise mines or former World War 2 ordnance to allow an amphibious force to land. "The infantry training was

"The infantry training was good, maybe because it was new for us, and because it was new we were taking it in a bit more.

"Because it is life-saving stuff, perhaps we switched on to it a little bit more."

The Navy divers trained with 49 Field Squadron (EOD), part of 33 Engineer Regt (EOD), and faced a relentless schedule of practical and theoretical work, although there was still the chance to assert their Naval roots; on one section attack the cry was heard of "enemy ships Red 20, 50 metres ahead."

"There was something on virtually every week, then a month of pre-op and summer leave, then more training courses," said Digger.

"There was infantry training and technical training, and we have had a lot of intelligence briefings on EOD and IEDD, what is being used by the Americans that might fail to function, legacy stuff from the Soviet Union or other Gulf nations that may be used by the

Taleban."

Divers handling .50 calibre sniper rifles is an interesting concept, but Digger believes he and his colleagues were proficient enough to hold their heads high

alongside the squaddies.

"On a lot of exercises, because we were dressed in green and were attached to 49 Squadron, a lot of units didn't know who we were, and we just cracked on," he said.

"People just assumed we were Army – maybe that's a testament to the training we had, and maybe to our abilities."

Les Cockerton added: "We have been amazed by the training package we have had, and they have made us feel very welcome.

"Morale is good, and we feel as prepared as we can be. A lot of us said some weeks ago that we were ready to go."

The team will be cheek-by-jowl with Army units on the front line.

"The traditional view is of a team based in Camp Bastion and waiting for a call or a planned operation, like Panther's Claw, but there is a change of tack for Herrick 11," said Digger.

"EOD teams are going to be based in FOBs, living, eating and sleeping alongside whichever Army unit is there.

"We will be there for six to eight weeks at a time, and go on regular foot and vehicle patrols and forays.

"We are like glorified infantrymen until we step forward and deal with ordnance or an IED.

"We have had briefings from people who have been out there, but if you are out of the country for more than two weeks you are out of date."

The locations of flashpoints in the fight against Taleban insurgents change with time – FOB Inkermann (known as 'Incoming') used to be the hotspot, now it's Babaji, a Taleban stronghold in southern Afghanistan which was the battleground for Operation Panther's Claw.

Higgy said: "It sounds like we will be hopping from FOB to FOB – they do not want some of us in one FOB getting thrashed if others in another FOB are not doing much.

"We are taking a White Ensign with us which will come out in the FOB as we are flying the flag for the Royal Navy.

"But because of the terrain we are in, as soon as we exit the gates of the FOB it stops."

Cdr Greenwood concluded:
"They are there primarily to save
lives – to open up routes through
areas and for warfighting in
support of Joint Service EOD.

"From Navy diver to land bomb disposal operator or sandman, I am confident they will do us all proud."

"There will be a priority when we get back to get us back into our diving training for our normal roles," said Higgy.

"And although there will be some skill fade, I am sure we will all look forward to getting our heads wet again on our return." FAST food for thought



IF YOU'RE going to take down a boat swarming with terrorists, you can do no better than having the world's two pre-eminent boat-swarming-with-terrorists stoppers on hand.

Enter R Squadron, Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines and their US Marine Corps counterparts, the Fleet Anti-terrorism Security Team (FAST).

The two joined forces for two weeks of training in Scotland, the latest round of combined training under the banner of Exercise Tartan Eagle.

The two marine corps take it in turns to arrange combined exercises either side of the Pond.

This year it fell to FPGRM to do the hosting - and they divided their visitors into two groups.

One enjoyed life at Faslane, the other headed to the ranges at Kirkcudbright, 100 miles to the south of the Scottish naval base.

The Americans staying in Faslane took part in boarding training on the Clyde, accompanied by the Royal Marines' Boat Troop and practised the art of taking down a suspicious vessel by boarding tug boats.

They also conducted rope training from gantries (which admittedly probably look a lot like American gantries), and just in case they were feeling homesick, there was a US nuclear submarine visiting Faslane at the same time.

Meanwhile in Kirkcudbright camp 100 miles to the south...

The Dumfriesshire ranges are a regular haunt of marines north of the border - they were used by 45 Cdo in the run-up to its recent deployment to Afghanistan.

The ranges can be used for live firing exercises, which is exactly what the RM and USMC did, staging a series of attacks with live ammunition to practise fire team assaults.

The Royals also got to show their US cousins the fine art of speed marching. Several American faces dropping as they realised that there was no bus and it was four miles back to camp. Everyone made it back in one piece, although a number of the US Marines seemed determined to show the FGP guys what they had for lunch.

One of the highlights for the both sides on the ranges was the chance to conduct some cross training: the USMC picked up British SA80s, while the commandos tried out the legendary American M16 rifles.

As well as training during Tartan Eagle, there was a chance for the Americans to immerse themselves in British - and US history.

The Royals took them to Spean Bridge - site of the imposing Commando Memorial and a museum to the forebears of today's green berets. In WW2, nearby Achnacarry Castle was the hub of training for British commandos and US Rangers.

Tartan Eagle ended with a barbecue, allowing everyone to let down their very short hair after a challenging series of activities.

 (Left) Prepare to board... FPGRM bring the FAST boarding party alongside a tug in the Clyde and (right) an American marine enjoys rapid roping at Faslane Pictures: LA(Phots) JJ Massey and Gaz Weatherston, FRPU North





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Public eye and DSEI

IT'S been a non-stop month for HMS Somerset in the public eye: the good folk of Devon, London and the frigate's namesake county have all benefitted from tales of her recent exploits.

Straight from Navy Days in Devonport (she left the show early just to get there in time) Somerset headed for London

The frigate was the RN's representative at DSEI - Britain's biggest 'supermarket' for military kit - at the ExCeL Centre in London's Docklands.

The Type 23 served as a backdrop for firms to show off their wares, hosted tours of foreign delegations and welcomed First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope aboard.

Meanwhile, Lt Jim Harkin and AB(Sea) Danny Tregarthen set off in search of dosh. The pair plan to trek across 100km of the Sahara in nine days to raise money for Help for Heroes.

They'd already collected £900 at Navy Days and added to their tally courtesy of defence giant Finmeccanica (who own AgustaWestland inter alia) who agreed to sponsor the trekkers. Jim and Danny set off this month with the aim of raising £5,000.

Londoner AB(Sea) Tony 'Tanzy' Lee took the opportunity of the visit to his hometown to hold a christening for his son, inviting all his shipmates to attend.

From London, it was back to the West Country - not Devon, but Somerset.

The ship's company tore around the county in a single day as they visited affiliates and outlined what the Type 23 had been up to since they last dropped in.

So that meant popping in to Baytree Special School, Bridgewater College, Downside School and Somerset Legion House, among others.

At the college, CO Cdr Andrew Burns gave a presentation to students on the ship's Taurus 09 deployment to the Far East with an amphibious task group (mixed with a bit of anti-piracy work on the way home), while his sailors answered questions on life in the 21st-Century RN.

Next to Weston-super-Mare and Baytree School which caters for young people with severe learning difficulties and/or profound and multiple learning difficulties.

It has up to 67 pupils aged between 3 and 19 years, and prides itself in good working relationships with a range of local schools and colleges and provides opportunities for pupils/students to integrate with mainstream peers with placements geared to individual needs.

The sailors took part in a variety of activities with the children from helping them with their school work to playing with them in the playground.

"The work of the staff of Baytree School was humbling to witness," said CPO Jason Jones. "The patience shown by them and the positive effect they had on the children was incredible."

Still in Weston, there was time to see the guests at Somerset Legion House which is run by the RBL to give Service and ex-Service personnel a break as they recover from illness, hospitalisation or bereavement.

On to Bath and Downside School, a boarding school for boys and girls, and another talk by Cdr Burns on Somerset's recent achievements.

And finally to the historic city of Wells where the sailors helped the RN Presentation Team with their talk/display for 120 or so locals.

"The day in Somerset was a great opportunity to meet with a number of affiliations and to develop our relationship with them,"

said Cdr Burns. "It's important that we make the effort to keep in close contact as it allows us to inform the wider community about what the Royal Navy is achieving at sea. It was a really enjoyable day."

AB(CIS) Illana Venetti and CPO Jason Jones join in the fun with



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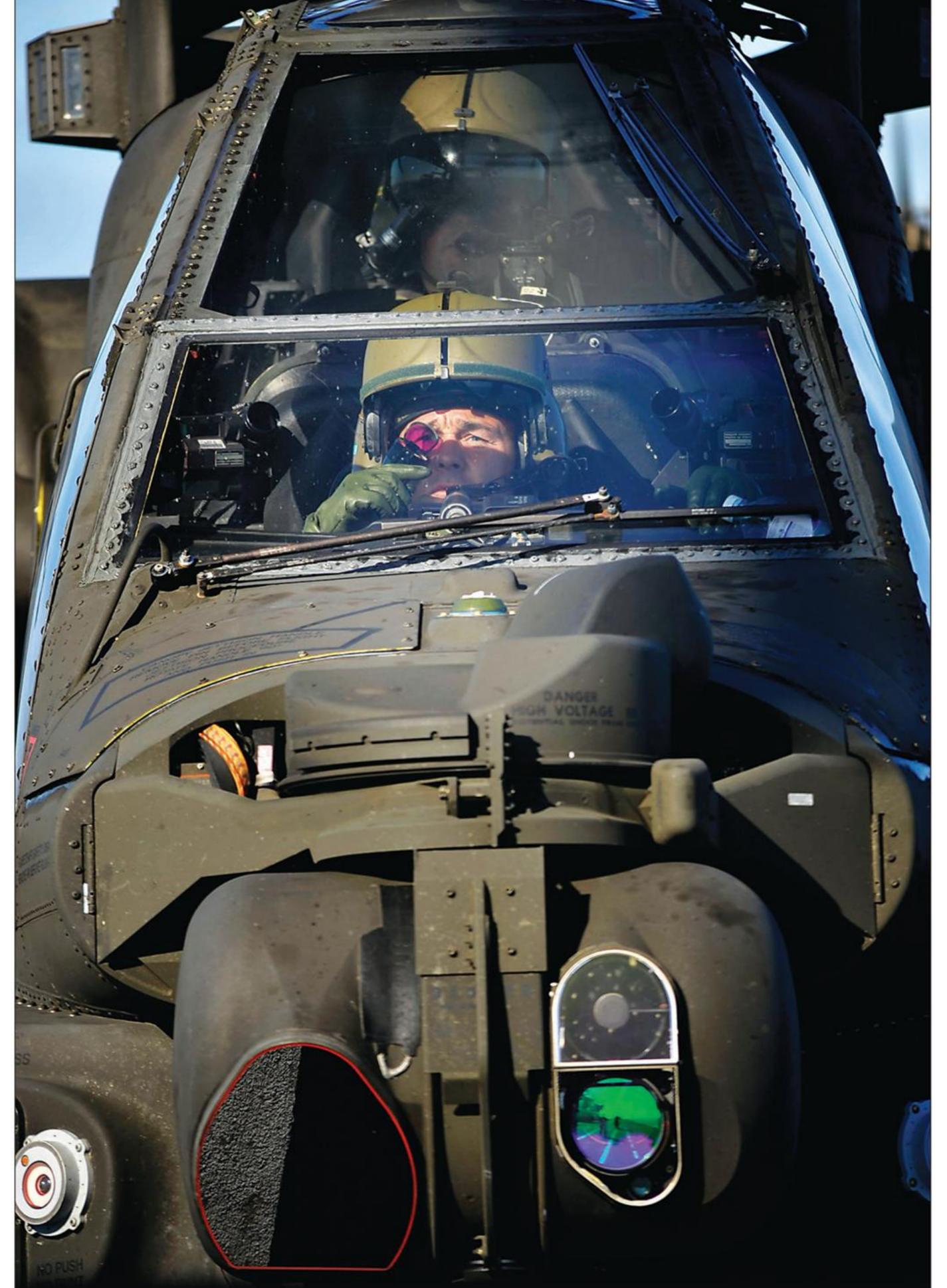
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The gunship ship

THIS is the unmistakeable - and rather imposing - sight of an Apache gunship.

But what you can't tell from this closeup is that it's parked on the flight deck of Britain's biggest warship.

It's been five years since the most potent helicopter in Britain's arsenal set down on HMS Ocean.

Ocean was at the heart of revolutionary trials to test the ability of the Apache to operate at sea when the gunship first entered service with the Army Air Corps.

As yet demands of war in Iraq and Afghanistan have meant that the Mighty O hasn't deployed with Apaches, but after that five-year hiatus, defence chiefs are keen to see the gunship go to sea more often.

To that end, two Apaches from 4 Regiment AAC from Wattisham in Suffolk flew aboard the helicopter carrier.

They brought with them ground crew and eight pilots, many fresh from front-line operations in Helmand where they've been supporting Allied troops.

The Army Air Corps pilots conducted a series of day and night landings (128 in all) on Ocean's sprawling deck to achieve their 'deck qualifications', opening the way for further work with the carrier.

"Due to our commitments in Afghanistan the chance to carry out such training is limited, but with HMS Ocean sailing past our front door we were able to make the most of this opportunity," said the appropriately-named Lt Matt Punch, the RN maritime operations officer with 4 Regt.

"Operating from a ship's deck is a new challenge for our pilots who are more used to the dust of Afghanistan, but is well within the Apache's capability.

"128 deck landings to qualify eight pilots in only two days is more than we could have hoped for. We're in an excellent position to carry out further maritime training in 2010."

The Apache's not the only rare 'bird' to drop in on Ocean. The carrier's used to hosting the Lynx, but normally the 'skidded' variety of 847 NAS.

Instead, it was the wheeled variant of the agile helicopter which dropped in on the ship as 702 NAS brought student pilots and observers along for some deck landing experience.

The Apaches and Lynx were on board as Ocean paid her first visit to Sunderland in

four years, catching up with old friends. Some 5,000 Mackems toured Ocean

when she opened her gangway to visitors for five and a half hours during a four-day stay on Wearside.

Other duties in Sunderland included hosting an official reception and giving guided tours of Britain's largest warship to the region's Sea Cadets.

On the sporting front, the rugby team took on Blaydon RFC while football fans were treated to a tour of the impressive Stadium of Light, home of Premiership side Sunderland AFC.

"We really enjoy being able to bring this great ship into Sunderland," said Commanding Officer Capt Simon Kings. "We are lucky enough to have really strong ties here with our affiliated city and we always get a great welcome.

"The hospitality we receive in Sunderland is always second to none - we're proud that the Sunderland people have taken us so much to heart. And it's always nice to be able to give something back, which is why we like to be able to open the ship up for visitors."

This was the ship's sixth visit to the city; she was granted the Freedom of Sunderland back in 2004.

Picture: LA(Phot) Bernie Henesy, HMS Ocean

Actress joins Navy? As if...

A FORMER actress who became disillusioned with showbiz has joined the Royal Navy.

Emily Corrie (30) spent 12 years working on shows such as Making Waves, A Touch of Frost, Casualty and Doctors, and played Ray Winstone's daughter in the series Births, Marriages and Deaths.

Her best-known role was probably that of Suzanne 'Sooz' Lee in the cult Channel 4 show As If, which ran from 2001 to 2004.

Emily (right) was invited to transfer the character to the American version, but the show did not match the success of its UK counterpart.

After three years of working in Los Angeles, Emily decided she needed a new challenge.

"To be an actress in LA is demoralising," she said.

"It brought about the realisation that I didn't want to be in the industry any more. "I'd done what I'd wanted to

do and worked with some good writers and directors. "I never wanted to be a leading lady and decided I just wanted to

experience a normal life." And in Emily's case, normality



 Emily tackles the assault course Pictures: Dave Sherfield



meant the Senior Service and basic training at HMS Raleigh.

"The Royal Navy seemed the obvious choice for me," she said.

"I've always lacked bit of self discipline and was prepared to have that enforced."

Emily, who is engaged to RN warfare specialist AB Gary Street of HMS St Albans, said: "The training has been great.

"It's been very challenging, particularly physically, considering my age.

"I've improved ten-fold and am very proud that I shaved three minutes off the time I achieved in week one for my mile-anda-half run."

She added: "Training has been the most exciting thing ever. Glamorous as the film industry is, it can be boring and you can become lazy waiting around.

"During training I have discovered that when I'm told to do something I can give 100 per cent and it has been very pleasing to find that out about myself."

Emily now starts ten months of seaman specialist training, split between Raleigh and HMS Collingwood.



HMS Triumph, held in place by steel wires, opens ballast tank vents as she starts her basin dive

Back in her element

HERE'S an unusual sight.

No, not a submarine submerging that's what they are designed to

But HMS Triumph submerging - that is something you won't have seen for around five years.

The Trafalgar-class boat reached a milestone in her refit (or Long Overhaul Period and Refuel programme) with a successful basin dive at Devonport.

During the overhaul, many changes are made to the submarine's structure and equipment, which can affect the performance of crucial systems.

They can also affect the weight distribution of the boat.

A basin dive is a crucial test to ensure the submarine can dive, achieve neutral buoyancy and surface independently, while also checking that the numerous hullbreaching systems are watertight.

Months of planning by Babcock Marine employees and ship's staff saw the boat towed to the middle of the dockyard basin, over a specially-dredged trench.



HMS Triumph during her basin dive at Devonport

She was held loosely in place by steel hawsers and, with her systems, including the successful Commanding Officer Cdr Rob Dunn on board, the boat's vents were opened and her ballast tanks filled for the first time in five

With just the top of her fin showing - allowing a diesel generator to run, maintaining essential systems - the boat started a 30-hour test programme.

A team of 44 Service and

civilian personnel checked various discharge and recovery of four dummy torpedoes.

Large weights were shifted forward, aft, port and starboard, so that deflections of two long pendulums, fitted for the tests, could be measured and the effect on trim and stability calculated.

With the galley not yet operational, ship's staff were issued with ration packs for their time

on board, providing a more-thanadequate 3,000 calories per man - for long periods personnel were required not to move around.

Cdr Dunn said: "I am immensely proud of everybody's effort to enable us to achieve our first dive.

"The performance of the boat's systems and crew bodes well for the remainder of our post refit trials and subsequent return to the front line."



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Days of Humber

ORDINARILY Hullensians don't take a lot of notice of the comings and goings of Her Majesty's Ship Explorer.

Ordinarily, however, they're not accompanied by a Red Arrows fly-past, thumping live music, and ten Clipper yachts bobbing around.

The P2000 patrol craft was asked to take part in the start of the Clipper round-the-world race on the Humber. It was an offer she couldn't refuse.

In fact, there was a three-day festival to mark the beginning of the first leg of the race from Hull - and the small RN university boat joined in throughout.

Explorer serves the universities of Hull, York, Sheffield and Leeds, earning her the tag YURNU (Yorkshire Universities Royal Naval Unit).

Five students were on board (plus the regular ship's company, led by CO Lt Jonny Bannister) for the opening day of the festival when a demonstration was laid on for the city's VIPs on the Humber.

They watched as four of the 'lucky' students were transferred to an RNLI lifeboat, then winched aboard an RAF helicopter for a brief flight...

... which ended several minutes later as the undergraduates were winched back down on to Explorer - not an easy manoeuvre for either ship's company or air crew as deck space on a P2000 is minimal (to put it mildly). It probably explains why one of the students returned to the mother ship looking a tad green.

"The VIPs saw that our training ship is not just about sailing and navigation, but also about helping to train other organisations we may meet at sea," said Lt Bannister.

"The majority of the students during their time in URNUs will have the chance to experience winching at least once." If that wasn't enough excitement for YURNU amid three days of

live music, street fairs, art, fire sculptures (think metal sculpture set on fire), Explorer had the honour of leading the 'parade of sail'.

Now apparently according to a local saying, it's never dull in Hull. Except when you're hosting a major international sailing event...

Having enjoyed glorious late summer sun throughout the weekend, come race time it was overcast and gloomy. Luckily, yachts don't need the sun, just a good breeze - which there

Ten brightly-coloured yachts take part in the global Clipper race, all sponsored by a city, region or country - as reflected in the names such as Team Finland, Spirit of Australia, Hull and Humber and Uniquely Singapore.

Explorer guided all ten past Hull Marina (pictured below) and a waterfront filled with upwards of 150,000 people watching proceedings.

"Although leaving Hull Marina is a regular occurrence for the ship and her crew, she'd never done so in front of thousands of people - or to live music," said Lt Bannister.

"The crew also had to live up to the extraordinary performance of the Red Arrows whose display above the marina was the precursor to the yachts' departure.'

So no pressure then... In fact, it was the yachts which felt the burden of expectation more; two almost collided as they jostled position on the lengthy journey to the official starting position off Spurn Point, 20 miles

At the mouth of the great river, the yachts headed out into the North Sea, next stop La Rochelle.

And for HMS Explorer, the rather-less-exotic but still buzzing

downstream.





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Kings and 'streams

SAILORS airmen RNAS Culdrose shield their eyes as six Jetstreams enjoy their day in the autumn sun.

The training aircraft marked 30 years' sterling service with 750 Naval Air Squadron by flying in formation over the Cornish air station.

Understandably, the sight drew quite a crowd...

...who then withdrew to the comfort of HMS Seahawk's offices to tuck into a birthday cake celebrating those 30 years with the training squadron.

One of 750's most experienced pilots, Roger McDonald, and one of the squadron's youngest students, S/Lt Hannah Best, cut into a cake (shaped like a Jetstream, naturally) to mark the anniversary.

The squadron - motto Teach and Strike - provides instruction in navigation, airmanship, radio, radar and basic tactical skills to all observers in the Fleet Air Arm before they move on to specialist training anti-submarine (in Merlins), airborne surveillance and control (in Bagger Sea Kings), or anti-surface/antisubmarine/general

purpose duties (in

Lynxes).

The Jetstreams will be phased out by March 2011, their job being performed by four King Air 350s as part of a shake-up of basic flight training across the Armed Forces...

...bringing us neatly on to the trainer's successor, which does bear a striking resemblance to the letstream.

The first of four King Airs which will replace the nine Jetstreams with 750 has been delivered to the squadron - and duly painted in RN livery.

Faced with overhauling nine aged aircraft which were becoming increasingly costly to maintain, as well as requiring the latest technology found in front-line RN helicopters, Whitehall plumped for new machines.

"Although it still performs very well, the Jetstream has reached the end of its service life," said Lt Cdr Nick Armstrong, 750 NAS' Commanding Officer.

"Rather than fly nine Jetstreams, we will be able to achieve the same quality and level of training with just four of the new King Airs."

The King Airs - already successfully in service with the Royal Air Force - are being introduced to the Fleet Air Arm as part of the UK Military Flying Training System.



 All hail the new King... which does look remarkably like the old one: the first of the King Air 350s in 750 NAS' hangar at Culdrose

The new training setup will educate aircrew from the completion of basic training to the point they are handed over to operational aircraft; for RN observers (plus RAF navigators) that means Culdrose.

At present the basic observer course lasts 32 weeks, using the South West Approaches as its 'playground' with shipping

providing the 'targets' for students using the Jetstream's electronic

The King Air will do the same, but the software of the Tactical Mission Training system also allows instructors to 'superimpose' additional targets alongside the real 'targets' which appear on students' displays.

"The new system has a lot to live up to," Lt Cdr Armstrong adds.

"We don't want to make it too

easy for the students to rely purely on technology to do their job.

"Observers have to be able to rapidly assimilate a great deal of data, decide on the best course of action, safeguard their crew's lives and bring back their multimillion-pound aircraft in good working order."

All four King Airs will be in service by March 2011, when the last Jetstreams are paid off under a £52m 25-year contract with Ascent Flight Training.

Revamp begins

WORK has begun on a £21m three-year makeover for hangars and buildings at Culdrose to meet the needs of 21st-Century operations.

Many of the current facilities used by Sea Kings at the Cornish air station were put up in the early 1970s.

Three and a half decades later they are no longer 'fit for purpose' (the roof of one hangar recently vacated by the Sea Kings used to flap in bad weather...), so work has begun on replacements.

Initially, the Sea King Airborne Surveillance and Control squadrons -849, 854 and 857 NAS - plus the Sea King residual training units will move into the new facilities.

In the longer term, aircraft up to the size of Merlins could be accommodated in the new hangars.

The first turf for the replacement buildings was cut by AET Alex Davies, one of the youngest ratings in 771 NAS, and Culdrose's CO Capt Graeme Mackay.

Capt Mackay has already moved his staff from the other side of the A3083 (the air station

straddles the main road to the Lizard) into the former meteorological school building next to the runway because "this is where the business

He adds: "There is a complex machine working down here, 24/7, and perhaps the rest of the RN doesn't necessarily know what's going on, but the tempo is higher than the surface fleet.

"As a location for flying training, it's excellent: we've got FOST on the doorstep, good landscape for night vision goggles training and of course the Channel.'

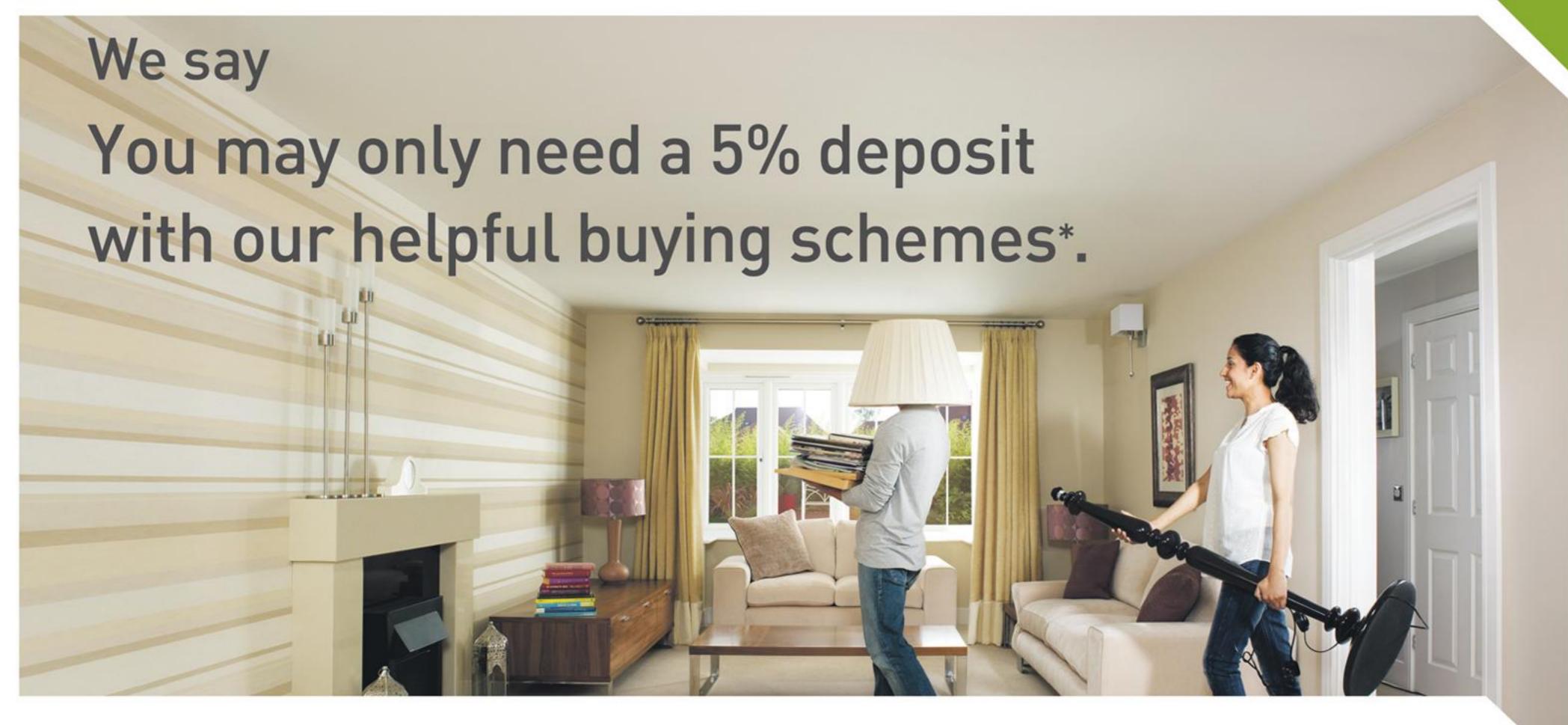
The airbase is home to ten squadrons, 80 aircraft including Hawk jets, Jetstream and King Air prop planes, plus Merlin and Sea King helicopters, 1,800 RN/Fleet Air Arm personnel and some 1,200 civilians making Culdrose the

biggest single employment site in the county. The rebuilding should be complete by 2012 and aside from meeting the demands of current aircraft and technologies, the new facilities are being designed with reduced energy costs in mind.

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SHIPS OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.644

The Teepee 2000

NOW here's a ship which enjoying an Indian summer.

And winter, spring and autumn

As her badge and motto suggest, HMS Tracker owes her name to Native American history.

She requires just five 'braves' (sometimes known as ship's company...), plus up to a dozen students to carry out her training and education.

Tracker serves Oxford and Oxford Brookes Universities, as well as Reading, with up to 51 students on its books (although not aboard) at any one time.

She's based with the core of the P2000s in Portsmouth, but increasingly you'll find her at sea even when the students are on board.

The small boats are increasingly

being called on by the rest of the Fleet for other duties, and Tracker is no exception. This autumn (between freshers fairs and the like), she's taken

navigators to sea for a spell of training. P274 has also been called upon to represent the RN at Armed Forces Day commemorations in Chatham and escorting a cruise

veterans out of Harwich. Easter and summer leave are typically the busiest time for the P2000s (while the rest of the RN is on holiday).

ship carrying Russian convoy

Tracker took her students to France, Belgium, and Holland (including a visit to Amsterdam) and her next URNU jaunt overseas is likely to take her to the Channel Islands at Easter.

Among the last acts of the summer 'season'... and the first acts of new Commanding Officer



A wave from the flying bridge of HMS Tracker, escorted by a Royal Marine ORC, during Navy Days

Lt Conor O'Neill was to take Tracker to Navy Days in Plymouth (via Dartmouth to ride out some rough September weather) to join in the 'anti-terrorist' display with the Royal Marines and Fleet Air

Roughly one in 20 visitors to Navy Days (that's 1,048 people) visited the small craft - not bad considering her size and the fact that she was on the water for a good chunk of the festival doing her bit in that display.

The present HMS Tracker is the third ship to bear the name.

The first was an American-built escort carrier which proved her worth in the second half of WW2 escorting Allied convoys - her Wildcats and Avengers sank U288

in the Barents Sea – and supporting the invasion of Normandy.

Thereafter she was returned to the US Navy and was employed as a ferry carrier in the Pacific.

The name was reprised shortly afterwards, this time in the form

Atlantic 1943-44 Arctic.....1944 Normandy1944

Class: Archer-class P2000 patrol craft Pennant number: P274 Motto: re rawira - on the warpath Builder: BMT Commissioned: 1988 Displacement: 54 tonnes Length: 68ft (20.8m) Beam: 19ft (5.8m) Draught: 6ft (1.8m) Speed: 24 knots Range: 550 nautical miles Complement: 5 ship's company, up to 12 students Propulsion: 2 x MTU V12 diesel engines Armament: Fitted for 3 x 7.62mm GPMGs and 1 x 20mm cannon Affiliates: Dover, University of Oxford, HMS Gloucester, HMS Turbulent, HMS Wildfire, Oxford Sea Cadet Corps

of a Landing Ship Tank, whose most notable duty perhaps was to act as hospital ship for the first British atomic bomb test which took place off the north-west coast of Australia in October 1952. She was sold for breaking up in 1970.



Survivors of the stricken LCG(M) 101 - Landing Craft Gun (Medium) - are helped on to Landing Craft Hospital 269 after being sunk by gunfire from shore batteries shortly after 10am on November 1 1944. LCG (M) 101 was charged with destroying pillboxes overlooking the landing beaches on the island of Walcheren. Under Operation Infatuate, Royal Marines landed at Westkeppelle and Flushing as part of the campaign to free the approaches to the Belgian port of Antwerp for shipping and supplies. (A26235)

■ THIS photograph – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@IWM.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



HEROES OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.67

AB 'George' Parker, BEM

ON THE first day of November 1961, Joseph Stalin was settling into his new home in the Kremlin walls - his corpse had been removed from Lenin's mausoleum as part of the country's process of de-Stalinisation.

Americans were picking up the first copy of a new superhero comic, The Fantastic Four.

In Berlin, tensions remained high after a stand-off between American and Soviet tanks at Checkpoint Charlie.

Of perhaps lesser significance on the global scale was the arrival home of Her Majesty's Ship Camperdown to pay off after 17 years' trusty service.

a Battle-class destroyer, but the end of a career for the unlikeliest of Royal Navy heroes. William 'George' Parker never won a medal

Her arrival marked not merely the passing of

for bravery (although he did earn a mention in despatches).

He never rose above the rank of able seaman.

And yet when he left the service in the autumn of 1961, the national media showed interest in his retirement.

Why? Well, for a start he was the only active serviceman to have served in the Great War.

He was probably the longest-serving able rate in Royal Navy history - 38 years, and every one of them at sea (in 43 years' service, his sole shore draft lasted a mere three months).

He certainly was the only rating in the annals of the Senior Service to be allowed to fly his own insignia on a masthead.

The Londoner joined the Royal Navy as a boy seaman at the age of 16 in 1918, qualifying as a bugler. He didn't see any action in WW1 - but he was

left in no doubt of the sacrifices it demanded. The boy seaman sailed with HMS Emperor of India to Turkey where he found the Ottoman Empire breaking up and its constituent nations at loggerheads.

Worse still was burying (and in some cases re-burying) the dead of the Gallipoli campaign four years after the fighting.

After a spell of gunnery training at Chatham, the now ordinary seaman sailed on a world tour with HMS Repulse and spent four years in the Far East, before a draft with HMS Tempest where more solemn duties ensued, bringing home the dead of the R101 airship disaster in 1931.

Much of the 1930s were spent with cruiser HMS York, first in the Far East, then in the Med. It was here that one of the Parker legends was born (the nickname 'George' had by now stuck;

it is believed to come from his resemblance to George V...).

When York was crippled by Italian motorboats in Souda Bay, a small detachment was left behind to man the guns for the defence of Crete. George was left with no bedding, but when the mainmast was shot down, he 'acquired' the battle ensign... and used it as his pillow.

He spent the next 18 months as a gunner with HMS Fareham (he reportedly shot down more than a dozen enemy aircraft).

Post-war George joined the new Battle-class destroyer HMS St Kitts (and spent 12 years in the ship, believed to be a record).

He made St Kitts his own. He lived not in the messdeck but in his own caboose. He fixed the future Queen's skirt when she came aboard. He became a father figure to young sailors - officers or ranks.

And he had a legendary ability to 'rabbit' items, not least his personal 'insignia'. George welded a spike to a toilet ballcock, persuaded the dockyard mateys to cover it in gold leaf and attached it to the foremast.

Mountbatten may (or may not - George was always a little hazy on the subject) have permitted any ship carrying the AB to 'fly' this insignia.

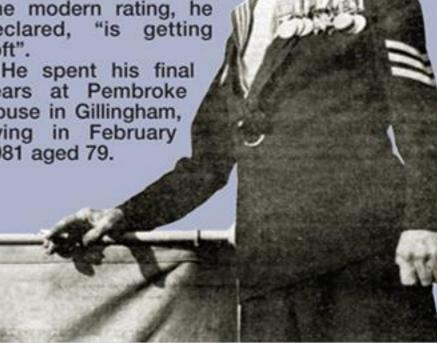
He certainly took it with him from St Kitts to Camperdown and it was flying when she paid

And so, aged 60, AB George Parker left the regarded his Service he loved and which character as 'very

throughout. was, conceded, time to go, for the RN of 1961, he told Navy News, was not the Navy he had joined. The modern rating, he declared, "is getting soft".

good/superior'

He spent his final years at Pembroke House in Gillingham, dying in February 1981 aged 79.



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Once a green beret, always a green beret... Veteran Royals pay their respects at the new Memorial Wall at Lympstone which features
45 'stars in the firmament' honouring commandos killed in the line of duty since 2000

Picture: PO(Phot) Christine Wood, CTCRM

'Stars in the firmament'

T IS shaped like the Rock which is the Corps' sole battle honour.

Seven pillars of granite rise up, but an eighth is missing – symbolic of the sacrifices Royal Marines have made for their nation.

On it are 45 plaques – "stars in the firmament" – with the names of every green beret killed in the line of duty since 2000; one more 'star' will be added shortly.

The Royal Marines Memorial Wall was formally dedicated at the Commando Training Centre in Lympstone, watched by more than 1,500 former Royals, friends, families, trainee Royals, men who already wear the coveted green beret and the RM Band.

The imposing monument, designed to emulate the Rock of Gibraltar – the only battle honour marked on the Corps' badge – was hidden behind a huge Royal Marines flag until the Commandant General Royal Marines, Major General Andy Salmon, led the service of dedication.

There are monuments and memorials to the Corps' fallen at Royal Marines bases across the UK, but Maj Gen Salmon said it was important for families and for comrades to have a single place to reflect on the sacrifices which commandos have made in the 21st Century.

The result is the £200,000 memorial wall: the pillars which form it represent the eight men in a Royal Marine troop.

"Since 1999 the Royal Marines have been busier than normal – and ever since September 11 2001 there has been an intense schedule of operations, leading to greater numbers of marines dying," Maj Gen Salmon told those gathered for the ceremony.

"The Corps of Royal Marines is an extended family in the greater sense and includes all those who have been connected with them, including veterans and families of serving marines.

"This memorial wall will help those brothers, fathers and other relatives come to terms with their sad loss.

"It also serves as a celebration of the lives of those who made the ultimate sacrifice since 2000."

Meanwhile, sacrifices made during a century of naval flight were remembered as a plaque



commemorating the four men who earned the nation's highest honour was dedicated in the Service's own church.

For the past 20 years St Bartholomew's in Yeovilton has served as the Fleet Air Arm's memorial chapel.

So it was the most fitting location for a service of thanksgiving for the 6,749 men and women of the Royal Naval Air Service and Fleet Air Arm killed in action or in accidents since 1909.

As part of that service a plaque (pictured above) was unveiled to the four naval aviators – S/Lt Reginald Warneford, Flt Lt Richard Bell-Davies, Lt Cdr Eugene Esmonde and Lt Robert Gray – awarded the Victoria Cross.

The relatives of the first recipient, 'Rex' Warneford who destroyed a Zeppelin in 1915 by dropping a bomb on the leviathan over Belgium, joined the head of the Fleet Air Arm, Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, and the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset, Lady Gass, plus air station personnel at the service.

St Bart's, as it is affectionately known by naval airmen, has been associated with naval flight since Yeovilton opened in 1940.

Fifteen aviators killed in accidents were laid to rest there for the first two years before the Naval cemetery was opened in the grounds of RNAS Yeovilton in 1942.

When St Bart's fell into disrepair in the late '80s, it was bought by the RN to serve as a

memorial chapel for the Fleet Air Arm and restored following an international appeal.

And in the now-tranquil surroundings of Scapa Flow, the Princess Royal led tributes to the 833 lives – two out of three of the ship's company – lost when battleship **HMS Royal Oak** was torpedoed by a German submarine in October 1939.

Princess Anne joined the dwindling number of survivors, families and senior officers for a remembrance ceremony aboard mine warfare vessel HMS Penzance seven decades on from the disaster.

Other smaller boats also stood by during the service, including the Longhope and Stromness lifeboats, plus Penzance's sister HMS Bangor; Bangor's crew had previously taken part in a 70th anniversary memorial service at St Magnus Cathedral in Kirkwall.

After the wreath-laying ceremony, the Princess Royal visited the Royal Oak Garden of Remembrance at Scapa, before joining survivors and guests at the Royal British Legion in Kirkwall.

The ceremonies were a poignant counterpoint to HMS Bangor's other activities while in port, which included hosting Orkney's Sea Cadet unit and members of the islands' Royal Naval Association before the ship opened its doors to local people.

"We always look forward to making port calls and welcoming people onboard our ship," said Bangor's CO Lt Cdr Peter Noblett.

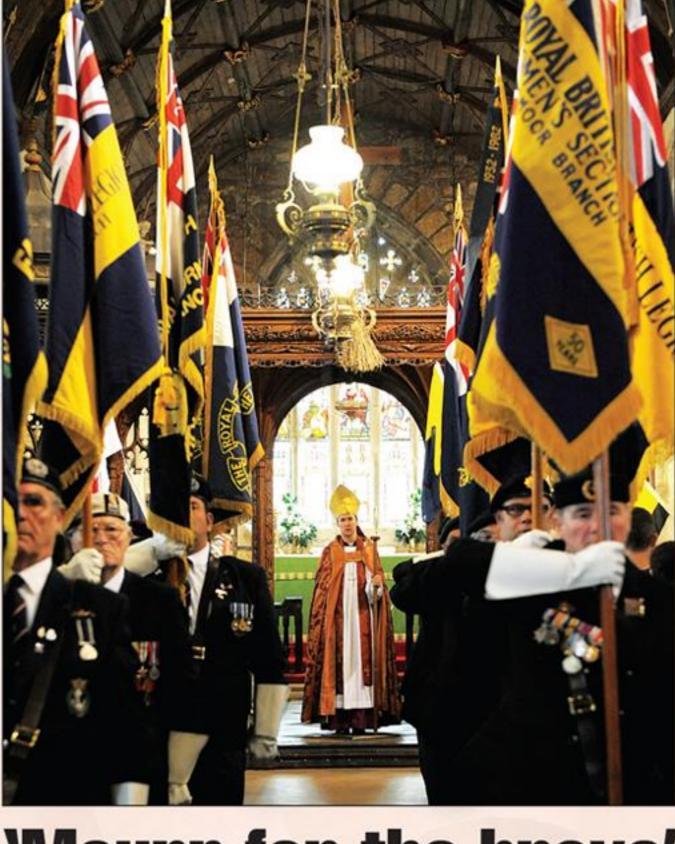
ictoria Cross.

The relatives of the first ecipient, 'Rex' Warneford who estroyed a Zeppelin in 1915 y dropping a bomb on the "But there was obviously a more sombre note to this visit, paying our heartfelt respects to those who lost their lives in the Royal Oak tragedy."

Bringing acts of remembrance back into the 21st Century, the sacrifices of more than 100,000 sailors, soldiers and airmen during six long, and often bitter, years in Iraq were remembered with a service of thanksgiving at St Paul's in London.

More than 2,000 serving personnel who hold the Iraq Medal and families of those who lost their lives in **Operation Telic** were joined by 13 members of the Royal Family, including the Queen, Duke of Edinburgh, Prince of Wales, Duchess of Cornwall and Prince William, plus past and present premiers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown.

The campaign to oust Saddam



'Mourn for the brave'

LEST we forget the immortal memory, sailors from RNAS Culdrose joined veterans and Cornish dignitaries for the Trafalgar thanksgiving service in the Church of St Maddern at Madron – as worshippers did 204 years ago.

As HMS Pickle brought news of Nelson's victory – and death – off Spain back to the mother country, so fishermen in Mount's Bay carried news ashore for fellow Cornishmen.

News of the triumph was initially proclaimed from the balcony of Penzance's Assembly Rooms (now the Union Hotel) in Chapel Street.

But for a formal service of recognition, townsfolk decamped to the mother church of Penzance in nearby Madron – and paraded what became known as the 'Nelson banner' featuring the epitaph "Mourn for the brave, the immortal Nelson's gone. His last sea fight is fought, his work of Glory done," (it remains in Madron church to this day).

And there it might have ended, but for a naval captain turned vicar who revived the service of remembrance in 1946.

Following Culdrose's arrival on the scene the subsequent year, air station personnel have been regular attendees at the October ceremony.

This year Commanding Officer Capt Graeme Mackay led the Culdrose representation. Aside from sailors senior and junior, he was joined by the Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall Lady Mary Holborow, local MP Andrew George, members of the Royal British Legion and a large contingent of Sea Cadets.

The service was conducted by the Bishop of Truro, the Right Reverend Tim Thornton.

Picture: LA(Phot) Jenny Lodge, RNAS Culdrose



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of the Commando Helicopter

Force, read prayers on behalf of

the RN and Fleet Air Arm, while

L/Cpl Gareth Thomas of 40 Cdo

did the same for the Corps; he

earned the Military Cross for

his bravery during the 2003

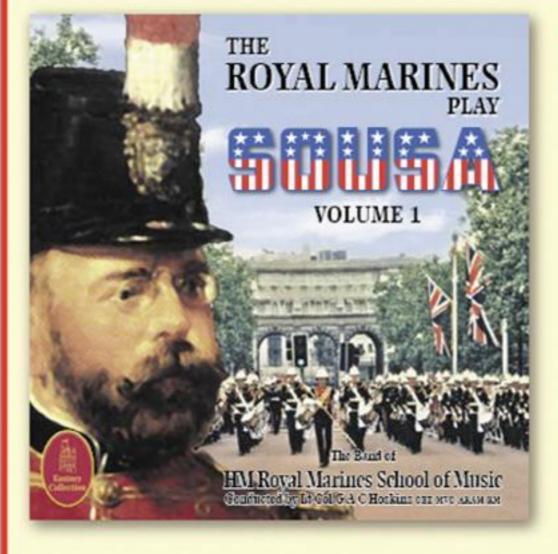
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Challenge leads the way

A FLAGSHIP training event continues to go from strength to strength with a record number of entries this year.

The Crowborough Challenge started as a single-unit event, organised by RNR unit HMS President, over a decade ago.

This year saw all 13 RNR units, plus six URNUs, field over 200 personnel in a competition which provides a tough Command, Leadership and Management challenge.

Teams camped out in the Pippingford Park training area in Sussex and on the first day faced eight different problems designed to test mental and manual dexterity.

There was also a sting in the tail – just when teams thought they had finished they had to dash round the site to gather parts of a code which together formed their ticket out.

Sunday's informal programme still brought out the competitive element as teams tackled the assault course and played volleyball.

Senior officers have started to pay closer

attention to events at Crowborough, and this year saw Maj Gen Simon Lalor, head of the UK's Reserves and 125,000 cadets, on site.

"What I have been impressed with is the intensity of it," said Maj Gen Lalor. "The tasks are not easy and nor should they be.

"I think the training value is right up there, so congratulations to everybody involved in the organisation."

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey called in for the second year running. "What comes through really forcibly from

this is the degree of teamwork and the sense of ethos - we are the Reserves and we have a role to play, we are good at it and we are prepared to train, work hard, have this kind of parallel career and take it really seriously," he said.

"Apart from all that, what you really see in people's eyes is that this is fun as well."

He also acknowledged the work of the organisers - Lt Cdr Ant Chapman, exercise director Lt Jo Young, Lt Greg Young and WO

Tony Matthews, supported by a team of all ranks and rates, who have spent eight months planning the Challenge.

"Leadership in the field is one thing, and that's what we are seeing loads of here, but there's a tremendous value to be had from leadership in the office, where the senior officer or senior rating has to flex his muscles and make something happen," said Admiral

"I have to say HMS President, as ever, has done a cracking job here."

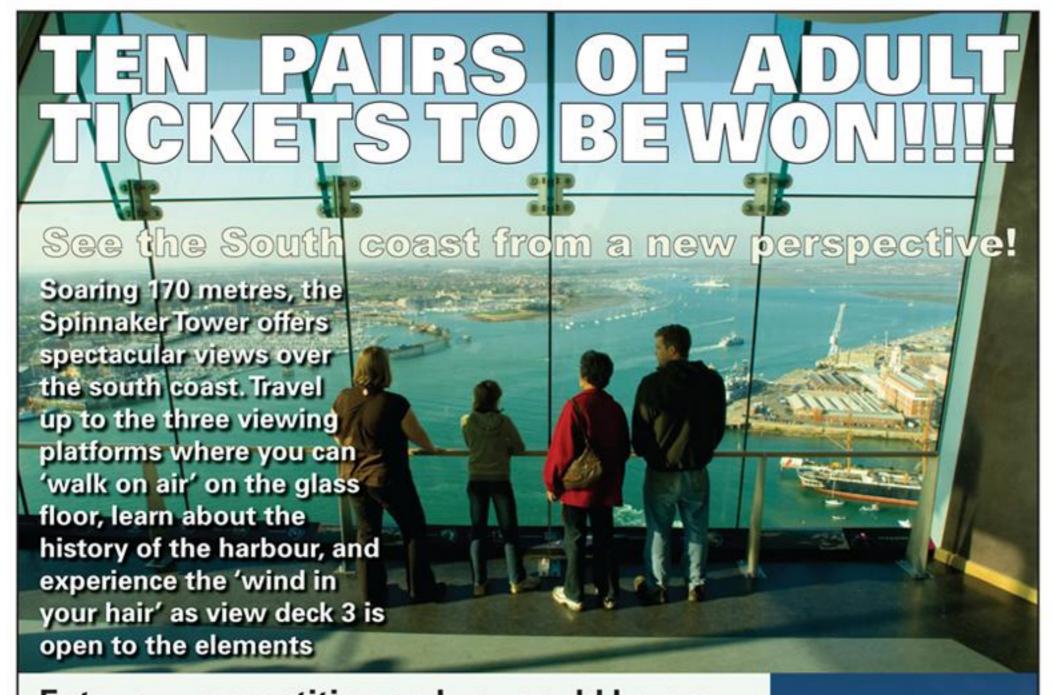
Commodore Maritime Reserves Cdre Chris Steel said: "This weekend is a perfect example of what employers get back from the reservists that they employ - these people are developing some fabulous team-working skills."

By the end of the event 106 Reservists had passed their RN Fitness Test and the team from HMS Scotia, led by Lt Katriona Fletcher, had lifted the Crowborough Challenge Cup as overall winners.



 A team from HMS Forward (Birmingham) with their (unintentionally) submersible raft during the Crowborough Challenge

RN Reservists rapid roping from a Lynx helicopter with RFA Mounts Bay forming a suitable backdrop off Bournemouth beach



Enter our competition and you could be one of ten lucky winners of a pair of adult tickets to travel up the Spinnaker Tower.

Simply answer the question below, complete the entry form and post to: Spinnaker Tower Competition, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, Hants. PO1 3HH

Or email your answer and details to: bm@navynews.co.uk

Closing date: 30th November 2009

Question: How many viewing platforms are there at Spinnaker Tower?

Answer Name AddressPostcode

Phone Email Address

Entries must reach the Navy News office by 12 noon 30th November 2009. Ten entries will be drawn at 15.00 hrs. Each lucky winner will be notified by email, phone or post and will receive a pair of adult tickets by post direct from the Spinnaker Tower. The decision of the judges is final and there is no alternative prize. Employees of Navy News are not permitted to enter the competition.

Reservists perform to bia crowd

IF YOU want to raise your profile you could do worse than perform to a large crowd.

And as crowds go, 1.34

million people is pretty large. So various elements from the Maritime Reserves and Cadets, predominantly from the South-West and South of England, together with regular RN personnel, were handed the perfect opportunity to show their worth at the Bournemouth Air Festival.

They weren't there simply for the popular two-day show, as Commander-in Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Trevor Soar had asked the Naval Regional Commander for Wales and Western England to offer "all possible support to the festival".

That support came in the form of 150 RNR and 30 RMR personnel, around 200 cadets plus local recruiting staff, primarily conducting training exercises but many of them also taking roles in the show itself, a Royal Marine Band and the Royal Marine Commando Display Team.

Landing ship RFA Mounts Bay, the mounting base for the exercise, and minehunter HMS Cattistock provided the Naval backdrop for the festival, which celebrated 100 years of Naval aviation.

RFA hosted and The provided accommodation for the

Reservists and cadets while also offering a wide range of training opportunities.

For the 30-plus New Entries those who have been in the RNR for less than three months - that meant lectures and basic training to prepare them for life on board a military ship. Their programme included

life raft drills, first aid, weapon handling, fitness training, a tour of the landing ship and a visit to Cattistock. More experienced Reservists

augmented the ship's communications teams and ran the amphibious operations.

For the equivalent number of RMR personnel it meant using the ship as a springboard for the beach assault alongside their regular colleagues, watched by a packed and appreciative crowd along the promenade.

One visitor particularly interested in the activities of the Reservists was Vice Admiral Dirk Debbink, USN Reserves, who spoke to personnel aboard Mounts Bay as he toured the ship with Commander Reserves, Cdre Chris Steel.

This unique training opportunity for the cadets and Reservists saw representatives at the events from HMS Vivid (Plymouth), HMS Cambria (Wales), HMS Flying Fox (Bristol) and HMS Forward (Birmingham), while support staff were drafted in from HMS

King Alfred (Portsmouth), HMS Sherwood (Nottingham) and HMS President (London).

personnel RMR predominantly from RMR Bristol but RMR London and RMR Scotland were also involved.

The Navy were further represented by the Black Cats Lynx display team, the new Royal Marines Band from HMS Collingwood and landing craft from 1 Assault Group RM.

RNR and RMR recruiters were also active ashore in the extensive 'Navy village' while Reservists and cadets took a leading role in the Beat Retreat each night.

Cdre Jamie Miller, the Naval Regional Commander who planned and led the exercise, said: "This was a perfect opportunity to draw together all elements of regional activity, committing the Maritime Reserves, Sea Cadets and ships, aircraft, bands and recruiting assets to deliver unparalleled training but also to engage with a huge cross section of the public, entertaining them but also letting them find out more about what the Royal Navy does at home and abroad.

"Many of the participants, both regular and reserve, had recently returned from operational deployments in Afghanistan and other theatres, and the friendly positive welcome they received from the public was heartwarming."



 Royal Marines Reservists stormed ashore alongside regulars in an amphibious assault exercise at Bournemouth Air Festival

Don't swamp the posties

THE public are being urged not to send unsolicited presents and mail to sailors and green berets on active service this Christmas.

Every Serviceman and woman deployed over the festive period will receive a parcel filled with goodies courtesy of the MODendorsed charity UK4U Thanks, as well as Christmas dinner.

But over the past couple of years, the military postal service has deal with vast numbers of 'goodwill parcels' sent by friends or, more usually, general wellwishers in the run-up to Christmas.

The result has been that at times, the British Forces Post Office has been overwhelmed by people's generosity.

"While such 'unsolicited' parcels are without doubt popular with recipients, the delays they inevitably cause to the delivery of personal mail are considerably less welcome," said Vice Admiral Peter Wilkinson, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Personnel).

Indeed, long after he left Helmand, one Serviceman continues to be sent parcels - one in seven items of post sent to his old BFPO is addressed to him. "Such mail takes up precious space on aircraft and, despite enormous efforts from postal staff, personal mail will inevitably be delayed," Admiral Wilkinson added.

Close family and friends of deployed personnel should continue to use the Enduring Families Free Mail Service – it is designed with them specifically in mind.

But if Navy News readers feel they want to send sailors and Royal Marines a gift in appreciation of their efforts, they are encouraged to donate to Support our Soldiers (www. supportoursoldiers.co.uk) or Thank The Forces (www. thanktheforces.com) who will send parcels to theatre on your behalf under a programme agreed with BFPO.

■ Meanwhile, four ex-Service personnel have set up a mail service for loved ones to send 'welfare packages' - a mixed selection of books, DVDs, nutty, magazines and the like - to deployed personnel.

The service, Mail Call, not only sells the goodies but boxes them up for you and sends them to BFPO on your behalf.

Ten per cent of profits from the new business goes to SSAFA Forces Help and Help for Heroes. See www.mailcall.co.uk for more details.

Breaking up is hard to do

OF WHAT was once Falklands veteran HMS Fearless, just 131 tonnes ended up in landfill as the former landing ship was 'recycled' on a scale never seen.

Breakers at Van Heyghen Recycling in Ghent, Belgium, completed their dismantling of Fearless in April and have now provided Whitehall with details of the 18-month process.

They say 98.1 per cent of the ship could be re-used.

By the time the Mighty Lion had been stripped of military kit, mementoes and the like, she was down to about 7,000 tonnes (in her fighting days she displaced 12,000 tonnes fully laden). 6,746 of those tonnes were recycled by the Belgian

Van Heyghen are also breaking up former RM training ship Rame Head and tanker RFA Brambleleaf.

Back in the UK, dismantling of Fearless' sister and fellow South Atlantic warrior, Intrepid, has also now been completed.

As Leavesley International in Liverpool finished breaking her up, they prepared to recycle two more decommissioned vessels.

Ex-Royal Fleet Auxiliaries Grey Rover and Sir Percivale are also being broken up by the Merseyside firm after being towed out of Portsmouth and Marchwood respectively last month.



• Fighter controller Lt Alex Kopsahlis and marine engineer officer Lt Cdr Jules Lowe plus Daring's junior rates stand in front of Birmingham's Council House during the Freedom ceremony

Picture: LH Raymond Hamley, HMS Daring

Freedom gained and honoured

DARING

CEREMONIES heartfelt and heartwarming have dominated the recent activities of Britain's newest warship.

The ship's company of HMS Daring visited their two affiliated locations - Birmingham and Guernsey to cement ties at two very different formal events.

More than half Daring's 180 sailors headed to the West Midlands as the Freedom of the City was conferred upon the new Type 45 destroyer, which is currently in the middle of extensive trials.

Before receiving the civic honour - which allows the sailors to parade through the city with drums beating, flags flying, swords drawn and bayonets fixed - the ship's company "talked Jack" with pupils of Rigby Hall School in Bromsgrove and toured the headquarters of Firmin and Sons, who produce swords among other additions to military uniforms.

It fell to the lord mayor of England's second city, Cllr Michael Wilkes, to present the casket containing the freedom scroll to the sailors in the shadow of Birmingham's magnificent Council House.

Thereupon, the sailors exercised their freedom and were applauded by New Street shoppers on an atypical Thursday morning.

"We were inundated with members of the ship's company wanting to be part of such a momentous occasion," said gunnery officer Lt Dave Thompson, organising the ship's guard.

"It was just fantastic that all the months of hard work paid off. I was very proud of my team."

Brummie S/Lt Aimee Moore naturally enjoyed the experience. "It made my grandparents very proud to see me at home, in uniform, but what was really special was talking to ex-Royal and Merchant Navy

"Some of those guys have great stories to tell and you could see everyone was enjoying each other's company."

As well as conferring the Freedom of the City upon the new destroyer, there was a little of the old Birmingham to present to Daring.

Understandably Birmingham had a close relationship with the Type 42 destroyer which bore the city's name proudly for a quarter of a century.

She flew the city's standard when replenishing at sea, a standard which was returned to Birmingham when The Brum paid off a decade ago. The flag has now been presented to Daring.

After Birmingham, the Darings headed to Guernsey, their other affiliate, this time taking their on the first year of Daring's life.

ship with them for the first sustained stay in the Channel Islands.

The destroyer anchored off St Peter Port for three days for a series of official functions, sporting fixtures (actually scuppered by weather which prevented the sportsmen getting off Daring...), and a Beat Retreat and concert performed by the Band of HM Royal Marines Collingwood.

The highlight of the weekend was the annual memorial service for HM Ships Charybdis and Limbourne.

The two vessels were torpedoed by German S-boats during an operation to intercept blockade runners in October 1943, with around 500 men lost.

Some of the bodies were subsequently washed ashore on Guernsey and buried with full military honours by the Germans, who forbade any locals attending the ceremony.

> Instead, roughly one in ten islanders paid their respects, laying 900 wreaths, as a show of defiance against their Nazi overlords.

Each year since liberation, the people of Guernsey have continued to pay their respects to the victims of the Charybdis and Limbourne with a memorial weekend, reaching its climax with a service at Le Foulon cemetery, last resting place of 21 sailors and Royal Marines.

A 13-strong guard was provided by Daring, with CO Capt Paddy McAlpine laying a wreath on behalf of the Senior Service.

"These events are something that my sailors will remember for the rest of their naval careers," said Capt McAlpine.

"When we deploy oversees, we carry the name of our sovereign, our country and our service, but we also carry the names of the places with which we are immensely proud to be affiliated."

The ship has also hosted members of the Association of Wrens who were celebrating the 90plus years of sacrifice made by women in the Senior Service – sacrifice marked by a Royal Mail stamp.

Marine engineer officer Lt Rachael Rake (currently serving at BRNC), Association of Wrens chairwoman Julia Clark (a WRNS range assessor in the late 50s) and Daring's own PO(MEM(L)) Cath Wojcik launched one of the six stamps focusing on RN uniforms through the ages.

Artist Graham Turner used a 1918 photograph of a wren officer who 'freed a man for the Fleet' as an instructor as the inspiration for the stamp depicting women in the Senior Service.

■ See our December edition for a special feature

Share your experiences of the front line

SAILORS and Royal Marines are being encouraged to record their experiences of front-line action so future generations can grasp the human experience of modern conflict.

The War Story initiative by the Imperial War Museum, endorsed by the Ministry of Defence and supported by military giant Boeing, aims to capture the ordinary experience of conflict - with the emphasis understandably on Afghanistan.

Over the next couple of years, experts from the IWM will work with Service personnel deploying to theatre, showing how film, art, photography and the written word can be used to record their experiences.

The museum has an enormous repository of personal memoirs, diaries, photographs and the like, especially from the 20th Century's two global conflicts.

By giving today's deploying personnel an insight into that collection, IWM staff hope to stimulate fresh material.

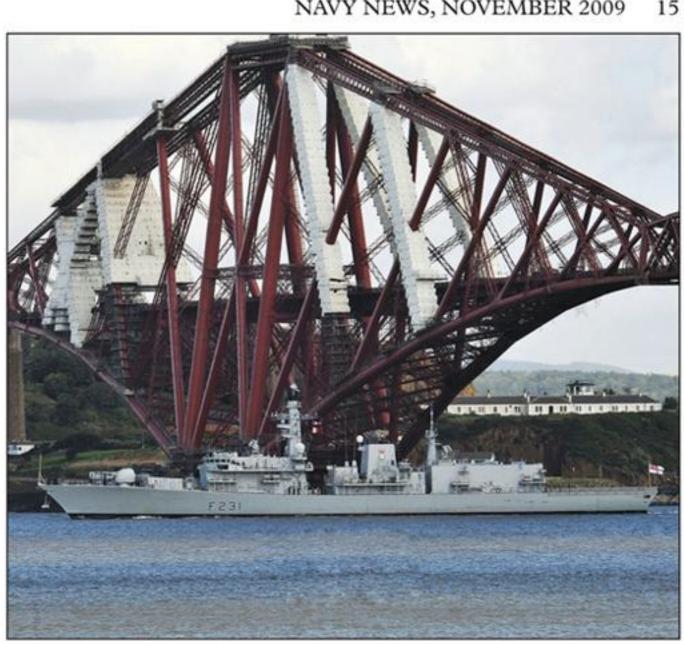
Some of the accounts recorded/collected and material gathered will be used in the museum's public displays - and be available to historians and researchers who tap the IWM's

archives.

"War Story will play an important role in raising public awareness of the personal experiences of Servicemen and women in contemporary conflicts. They will describe experiences that for many of us remain indescribable," said Diane Lees, the IWM's Director General.

An anthology of some of the first-hand accounts will be published in 2012 when the project is completed.

More details on the project are available from Victoria Smith at vsmith@iwm.org.uk.



Bute-iful days for Argyll

PASSING beneath the distinctive span of the Forth Rail Bridge, HMS Argyll heads for Rosyth.

And like the famous crossing, the frigate is now hidden behind scaffolding and sheeting as she begins a 12-month refit.

Before she bowed out of active duties, there was one final fling for her men and women.

No, not like that, but the Highland Games on the Isle of Bute, the last port of call ahead of that multi-million-pound overhaul. The Type 23 dropped in on the island's 'capital' Rothesay, firing

a salute to mark the opening ceremony of the event (the opening honours were performed by Taggart actress Blythe Duff). Argyll also found time to host her affiliated Sea Cadets from

Irvine, veterans from RNA Stirling and the Duke of Argyll. All heard about the ship's experiences in the Med earlier this year with the Taurus task group, while the latter christened his daughter onboard using the ship's bell, upturned as a font, for the ceremony. Ashore, members of the ship's company mingled with

competitors and the crowd at the games, while Lt Cdr Steve Forge presented prizes to winners of the children's shinty competition.

"It's important that we maintain our links with the people of the region that gives the ship her name – and show why they can be proud of what she's achieved," said CO Cdr Peter Olive, "although the many operational demands made upon the Royal Navy can make this difficult."

Thereafter the ship sailed for Cape Wrath, through the Pentland Firth and under the Forth Bridge to begin a major revamp in the hands of Babcock Rosyth.

Cdr Olive and some 150 of his shipmates have now left the Devonport-based frigate, leaving 35 hardy souls on the Forth to help local engineers and shipwrights with the refit.

HMS Argyll's due to emerge from her revamp in late 2010.

Picture: LA(Phot) Pepe Hogan, FRPU North

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LS Christopher Smith has won a prestigious prize for an outstanding performance at HMS Raleigh.

The rating, who served in HMS Northumberland, received the Institute of Seamanship award for achieving an overall mark of 97.8 per cent on his Leading Seaman (Sea) course last year.

The silver salver was presented by Lt Cdr Nicko Franks (Retd) from the Institute of Seamanship, who said that LS Smith proves the art and skill of seamanship is alive and well in the Royal Navy.

THE Muslim Chaplain to the Forces, Imam Asim Hafiz, has welcomed plans to embrace all faiths at HMS Raleigh with the building of a new dedicated prayer room.

During a visit to Raleigh, Imam Asim visited the existing prayer room, which is to be relocated into a new building alongside the main chaplaincy complex, watched recruits undergoing training and spoke to two trainees of the Muslim faith, Logs Kebba Jaye and Kemo Kassama.

A NAVAL officer was due to take his place on stage in the West End as Navy News went to press.

Lt Edward Black, a diving officer recently returned to the UK from Bahrain, was due to be one of the ensemble (around 150 strong) in a production of Crazy for You at the London Palladium.

Rehearsed from scratch in just 48 hours by Eyebrow Productions, the musical will raise money for Cecily's Fund, helping Zambian

Edward was at school with Cecily Eastwood, after whom the fund is named, and who died in Zambia while on a volunteering visit.

www.showtimechallenge.co.uk

AN able rating at HMS Raleigh has won a special commendation from his CO in recognition of his role in hosting visits by youngsters on work experience at the training establishment.

AB Ian Beacon, from Jamaica, was chosen to help with the programme while waiting to start specialist training.

Over a three-week period he escorted some 30 14- and 15-year-olds, winning acclaim from Capt Jonathan Woodcock for his "can-do approach" and "meticulous attention to detail".

Veterans visit modern warships

TWO war veterans have taken the opportunity to visit modern Royal Navy vessels.

Albert Horatio Jones found himself back on board HMS Illustrious, though not his

Illustrious, the wartime carrier. Ex-Stoker Albert joined the Navy 70 years ago this month, and served in Illustrious from commissioning in April 1940 until late 1942.

During his time on board the carrier took part in the Battle of Taranto.

Albert (90), who emigrated to Canada in 1958, and his son Michael were guests on the current Illustrious alongside in Portsmouth.

It was a submarine rather than a carrier which interested John Huckle when he was hosted by the Devonport Flotilla.

John (85) served in HM ships King George V and Calder – in which he won the DSC – before moving on to submarines Vulpine and Springer.

He was shown round HMS Talent by her CO Cdr Simon Asquith, and submariner Lt Cdr Peter Stanton-Brown also arranged for John to peer through the periscope of the Talisman submarine command team trainer.

Charlotte joins after sea-time with family

TWO weeks at sea with members of her family convinced Charlotte Stocker that the Royal Navy was the career for her.

And Trainee Warfare Specialist Charlotte (21) has now followed in the footsteps of her father and two brothers.

Last year Charlotte took part in the RN's 'Families at Sea' initiative, joining her father CPO Kevin Stocker and brother Oliver (20) in HMS Illustrious as the carrier sailed home from Gibraltar.

She also spent a week with 18-year-old Alex on board HMS Nottingham.

Charlotte said: "Before going to sea with Dad and my brothers I had no intention of joining the Royal Navy, but as soon as I was on board the ship being shown round and seeing my family at work, I changed my mind."

On returning home she visited the local careers office and, having passed all the recruitment checks, she was asked to report to HMS Raleigh for basic training.

With nine weeks learning the fundamentals of being a sailor behind her, Charlotte said: "Training has been good, but

"Dad and my brothers gave me some inside tips on completing the course, including how to use cotton buds to shine my boots and how to revise for the exams."

As well as her parents and **Leading leading hand**



 Charlotte Stocker (second left) makes it a Senior Service quartet with brothers Oliver (left) and Alex (right) and father Kevin, who is now serving at HMS Collingwood where his daughter is training

brothers, some 35 members of her extended family were there to see Charlotte's passing-out parade at the end of basic training.

And among them was one very special guest - Charlotte's twoyear-old daughter Daisy, who is being cared for by Charlotte's mother Jayne.

"It has been hard leaving Daisy, and I couldn't wait to see her again," said Charlotte.

HMS CORNWALL'S special award for leadership

company is chosen for demonstrating leadership

qualities well beyond those expected for their rate

and experience, and they receive the Company of

performance on board during intensive training in

UK waters and on counter-piracy operations in the

"pivotal role" in the communications centre.

Sarah (left) was chosen for her exceptional

Frigate CO Cdr Johnny Ley praised Sarah's

Each year a member of the frigate's ship's

has been awarded to LS(CIS) Sarah Metcalfe.

Leathersellers' Trophy.

Gulf of Aden.

"I didn't think I would be able to do anything like this after she was born, but when I spoke to the women at sea who had children, they put it into a different

perspective. "I am now doing this for her because I want her to have a better life.

"I've kept in touch with her on the phone, and all the girls I've been training with have spoken

to her, so it's like they've known her forever.

"They will be like an extended family for her."

With basic training over, Charlotte took her summer leave and is now at HMS Collingwood, where she will train as a warfare specialist.

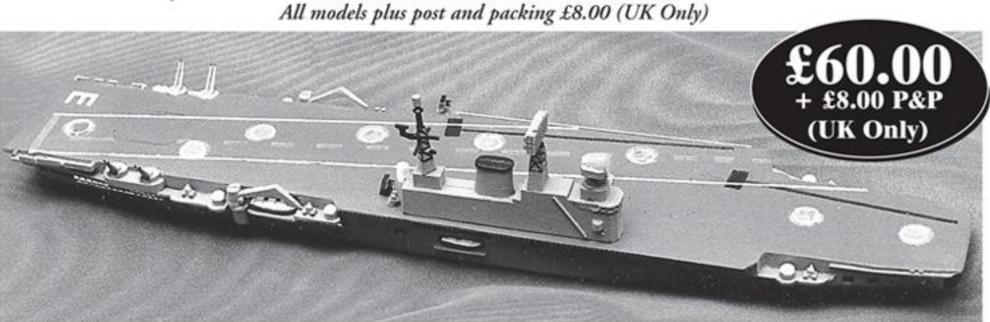
And the family ties are still as strong as ever - her father is also now serving at Collingwood.



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Sibling rivalry reflects carrier competition

WITH HMS Ark Royal leaving dry dock, the long-standing and healthy rivalry between the UK's two operational aircraft carriers is on again.

Illustrious is the older, Ark is slightly bigger, 'Lusty' featured in the Channel 5 Warship series, Ark is more senior and, she claims, "the most famous warship in the world..."

That rivalry is now embodied in the sibling competition between Sarah and Adam Vines (above, on Ark Royal), who are conducting Initial Fleet Training in preparation to outdo each other in their forthcoming Fleet Board.

The brother and sister have long wanted to join the Service, and both are former Sea Cadets.

They arrived at Dartmouth on the same day in April, but have been kept apart to help bond with new team members.

Adam (19), who aims to fly the Joint Strike Fighter, claims he led the way, but Sarah (23), a potential Warfare Officer, said the timing was just coincidence, and that both decided to join the Navy because of the "endless opportunities" it offers.

Although Sarah has already got some sea-time in on board Lusty, Adam is looking forward to closing the gap during his time in Ark.

Once they have completed their Fleet Boards and undergone further leadership assessment at Dartmouth their careers should follow very different paths. IFT under way - p35



Coulport visitor is rehoused

A YOUNG fox found skulking beneath a diesel generator at Coulport is now enjoying the good life outdoors at the Scottish armaments depot.

Environmental Health officers were called in from nearby Faslane when the cub (above) was found in a high security building.

As they could not just leave the door open overnight to allow Basil, as he has inevitably been dubbed, to escape, he was humanely trapped, using cat food as bait.

It is thought the animal found its way into the building to seek shelter from a heavy downpour.

Basil was driven to Helensburgh where a vet gave him a clean bill of health, then he was released back at Coulport.

"There is enough open land at the site to ensure that it can live a healthy life with plenty to eat and it won't be a nuisance to livestock," said John Belshaw, of Faslane's Environmental Health Department.

Assistance dog Endal is remembered

GULF War veteran Allen Parton has received an honorary PDSA Pet Tribute Tag in remembrance of his assistance dog Endal, who died earlier this year.

Endal's tag will remain on permanent display in the PDSA 'Paws Forever' pet tribute garden at Ilford in Essex.

Ex-chief Allen, who was injured during the Gulf War, and his faithful pet were well-known to millions through the development of their partnership.

Endal, a yellow labrador, was awarded the PDSA Gold Medal - the George Cross of the animal world - in 2002 for rescuing his owner when Allen had been knocked out of his wheelchair.

As Allen lay unconscious, Endal put him into the recovery position, covered him with a blanket and alerted staff at a nearby hotel.

The PDSA Dickin Medal won by Simon the Cat in HMS Amethyst during the Yangtse Incident 60 years ago has been returned to the RN for a year.

The medal, in recognition of Simon's vermin-catching prowess, helping preserve food stores, has been loaned to HMS Collingwood for an exhibition dedicated to the incident, when the sloop was attacked and trapped on the Yangtse for 101 days by Chinese Communist forces.

Behind the scenes

RECEPTION, Year One and Year Two pupils from St John's College in Southsea were treated to a VIP visit to HMS Illustrious in Portsmouth.

The visit, which gave them supervised access to parts of the carrier not normally seen by the public, was part of the pupils' studies on life at sea.

Workers clean up

TWO Sodexho staff at Culdrose have won certificates and £50 shopping vouchers in recognition of their professional achievements.

Sam Templeton-Lee and Sue Mallinder both have cleaning and housekeeping responsibilities on the Cornish air station.

PEOPLE 3

milestones

AN observer from search and rescue (SAR) unit HMS Gannet has clocked up more than 5,000 flying hours.

Lt Cdr Martin 'Florry' Ford joined the RN in 1979 as a caterer before turning to aviation in 1983.

Florry's first squadron was 820 NAS, and between that and arriving at Prestwick two years ago, he has flown with eight different units, some in conflict zones.

He has also trained observers in a range of helicopters from Lynx to Sea Kings.

In addition to his 5,000 hours aloft, Florry has also carried out more than 500 SAR missions, a record held by few in the FAA.

Earlier this year he was awarded a Queen's Commendation for Bravery in the Air for his role in a difficult rescue in the Scottish Highlands, adding to the Air Force Cross he won in the devastating Boscastle flood of 2004.

Colleagues, including his CO Lt Cdr Bryan Nicholas, helped Florry celebrate the landmark with a special cake.

Meanwhile the RN's other UK SAR flight, 771 NAS at Culdrose in Cornwall, can boast five aviators who have amassed more than 21,000 hours between them.

Pilot Lt Cdr Stan Burgess leads the way with 7,000 hours in a variety of ships and squadrons, while Lt Cdr Dave Lambourne, with 5,000 hours, brings a similar wealth of knowledge to the squadron.

The third pilot of the five is the CO, Junglie Lt Cdr Sharky Finn, with 3,000 hours.

The two aircrewmen have both logged 3,000 hours.

CPO Dave Rigg and PO Jason Bibby are both qualified paramedics, and are the men whose role often requires them to descend on the winch line to assist injured or trapped people, frequently in the most challenging weather conditions.

771 trains Baggers - p18

Career paths finally cross

TWO officers with parallel career paths have finally worked in complement posts - just as one was set to leave the Service.

Lt Cdr John Law and Cdr Phil Ireland went through Dartmouth together (1984-85), then Officer of the Watch course (1985-86) and Clearance Diving (1990-91).

Phil introduced John to John's future wife, and the officers were best man at each other's weddings.

Together they have racked up 50 years in the Navy, and almost 38 of clearance diving.

But now John has left his assignment as Senior Warfare Officer (Minewarfare Clearance Diving) to FOST (MPV), and Phil – as Commander Sea Training FOST (MPV) – was delighted to present his old friend with a leaving gift.

SAR airmen 'There's still life clock up in the old dog...'

A ROYAL Naval Reservist and veteran of the Falklands Conflict has returned to the front line - at the controls of an Army attack helicopter.

Lt Cdr Bill O'Brien (54) retired from active service in 2005, having originally joined the Royal Marines in 1971.

His first operational tour came 36 years ago in Northern Ireland, and he also flew during the Falklands and the 1991 Gulf War. But he has now volunteered

for a tour in Afghanistan with 663 Squadron Army Air Corps, flying an Apache, based at Camp Bastion for four months.

Lt Cdr O'Brien is one of around 600 reservists from all three Services in Afghanistan but the only one currently at the controls of a helicopter.

Before signing up for this deployment he was a helicopter

instructor at the School of Army Aviation in Middle Wallop, Hampshire, and had amassed 1,500 of his total of 6,000 flying hours on the fearsome Apache.

"The Apache had not been deployed when I retired so there is an itch yet to scratch," said Lt Cdr O'Brien. "I'm grateful for the hard work

the Royal Naval Reserve and the Army have put in to make it happen.

"I believe I have a contribution to make; there is still some life in the old dog."

The officer won the Distinguished Flying Medal in the Falklands while flying a Gazelle at the battles of Darwin and Goose Green.

At that time a sergeant in the Royal Marines, he conducted a number of casualty evacuations for members of the Parachute Regiment and resupply missions, including ammunition, at the front line.

Since 2005 he has been one of a handful of ex-military helicopter instructors who work alongside their Army counterparts at Middle Wallop to convert Army pilots from the Squirrel training aircraft onto the Apache.

At the same time he joined the RNR Air Branch, where he is an operations officer with the Commando Helicopter Force at RNAS Yeovilton.

Squadron Commander Maj Jason Etherington said: "Although Bill joined the Royal Marines a year after I was born, he still has the enthusiasm and dedication to match the vounger members deployed to Afghanistan.

"Well-known as an excellent Qualified Helicopter Instructor throughout the Army Air Corps, Lt Cdr O'Brien can claim to have assisted in the training of almost every Apache pilot within the squadron; his technical knowledge, experience and maturity are well valued.

Navy veteran leads campaign

A NAVY veteran is the man behind a growing campaign to gain official recognition for the market town of Wootton Bassett in Wiltshire.

Bill Thomas, a transport manager with Transline, served in the Navy in the 1960s and 70s.

He has written to the Queen and the leaders of the Labour and Tory parties asking for the town to be renamed Royal Wootton Bassett in honour of the tributes and respect shown by townspeople when the bodies of soldiers are driven through on their way from RAF Lyneham, the air station to which repatriated bodies are flown.



 Who better to spray wild fire into the night sky than a couple of Reservists from HMS Wildfire? Logs Sarah Stebbing and Carol Hawes had been on stewarding duty at the Bournemouth Air Festival, directing visitors to RFA Mounts Bay and other Service attractions. As night fell, attention turned to the town's sea-front gardens, where the RN team were unable to inflate the Fly Navy 100 balloon (the previous evening they had joined in with a 'night glow') so the crowds were entertained with a burst of fire from the burners instead



Lt Cdr Bill O'Brien in front of an Apache helicopter

"He is a hugely popular individual who brings a great deal to an exceedingly professional organisation."

When asked what is it like flying in Afghanistan as opposed to the Falklands, Lt Cdr O'Brien said: "The intensity is more than I was expecting and is more than I recollect from the other place. "It is full-on all the time."

He added: "I fly an Apache so I don't feel terribly threatened, although the flying environment is quite hard work sometimes.

"We are here to support the guys on the ground. We are here to support the Afghan people.

"I believe the average Afghan, like any other human being, just wants to put food on the table, send his children to school, know that his family is safe and that the rule of law prevails.

"The job needs to be done properly and I believe I can make some small contribution to that."

Of flying with the squadron's elder statesman, Lt Cdr O'Brien's co-pilot/gunner Capt Chris Vosper said: "It is awesome, it is a privilege.

"Bill is a very experienced pilot and we have become a good team.

"He is very good and patient; his age isn't a factor - he just gets more respect because of his experience.

"It is just a shame he is so slow running to the aircraft – I think his Zimmer gets in the way..."

The Apache is currently used as an armed escort for the lightlyarmed support helicopters and to provide armed 'overwatch' and support for friendly ground forces.

Neptune calls the tune

HMS NEPTUNE called the tune after taking the honours at the RN Volunteer Band competition in Portsmouth with a big-band take on Van Halen's Jump.

All nine bands from around the UK took part, but it was the only group from north of the border which got their hands on the Lear Wilkinson Dirk Trophy.

As well as picking up first place for best concert band performance,

Neptune also came second in the best soloist category and third in the best drum major.

"It was quite an achievement," said C/Sgt Mark Flintoff, Neptune Band Master.

"It was the first time in ten years we have won the trophy and it was down to the hard work and talent of our members, as well as an entertaining concert programme."

Megan's in (passport) control



on the exercise, but 21-year-old know how badly any ill-discipline Megan Keeling was in charge.

Megan, a midshipman who has just graduated from Southampton University in Ship Science and is yet to begin her Initial Officer Training at Dartmouth, signed up for a weeklong adventurous training exercise in Gibraltar.

And despite a lack of formal training, she was in command of the 24-strong Thunderer Squadron student team - seven female and 17 male students, most of whom have just finished their first university year.

"This is my first expedition," said Megan (left), a former Sea Cadet. "I volunteered to run this AT

exercise but, in law, I am not just running it, I am also the commanding officer - which is slightly scary!"

"Discipline is not a particular problem because the students know how much work has gone into getting

SHE was not even the oldest student this exercise off the ground and they would reflect on them"

So, have there been any problems? "Well, our sailing instructor didn't turn up at the airport in UK because of a domestic crisis and one of our girls had mistakenly put her passport in with her washing and the airline would not accept her mangled passport," said Megan.

"And since we arrived, another of the girls has lost her passport, so, all in all, passports have been something of a problem area for me."

As well as AT, the exercise has included visits to the Royal Gibraltar Regiment, RAF Gibraltar, Gibraltar Squadron and historical sites.

"I'm enjoying the exercise, but probably not quite as much as those who have a bit less responsibility," she said. "But, if it all goes well, it will be excellent experience for my Dartmouth course and for my naval career."

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WIND the clock back 12 months.

George W Bush was President of the United States (just). There was still a shop on the high street called Woolworths. The QE2 was still flying the Cunard flag.

Yes, a lot can happen in 12 months. Just ask the men and women of 771 Naval Air Squadron.

Twelve months ago, the Culdrose squadron was focused on saving lives (176 to be precise in 2008) in its Search and Rescue role (there was also the small matter of training new Sea King aircrew: four pilots and two observers).

But as the nights drew in on the Lizard Peninsula, there was one more call to answer, a plea for assistance from sister Sea King squadrons: help us train for Afghanistan.

Three weeks later the Ace of Clubs were in the skies with their Bagger brethren.

As we reported last month, 854 NAS (and now 857) have deployed to Camp Bastion to use their unique radars to track illegal activity in the Helmand 'dead zones'.

It's a new environment for the surveillance Sea Kings - and they needed to train for it, in particular night flights. They turned to 771 for whom flying with night vision goggles (NVG) is a nightly occurrence.

"To date, the Sea King ASaC force has never flown on NVG. We had the experience to teach night vision goggle flying," explains 771's CO, Lt Cdr arky' Finn.

"We taught them to fly safely on NVG including navigating low level down to re-circulate around the helicopter.

200ft. They normally fly much higher, but it is essential they have the skill to maintain their currency when flying in poor weather."

They didn't stop there. The 771 team also took the Bagger community to Bardufoss in northern Norway and the ranges of San Gregoria in northern Spain (in winter and summer respectively) to teach the art of landing in a desert and dealing with operating on sand.

Now you're probably thinking: Cornwall. Beaches. Sand. So why go to Norway and

Spain? Ah, well, just as the trains struggle with the 'wrong type

of leaf', so the shores of Cornwall are covered with the 'wrong type of sand' (wrong if you're training for Afghanistan, that is).

The fine snow of Bardufoss and the equally fine dust of San Gregorio are

ideal doppelgängers, however. "The sand in Afghanistan has the constituency of flour," explains Lt Cdr Finn. "The sand on the beaches here is much heavier."

So what's landing on Afghan sand like?

Well, the aircrewman is leaning out of the side door with a mask and goggles guiding the pilot in.

At first there's a small dust cloud which develops around the tail rotor.

Not a problem.

And then: whoosh. In a second, the entire Sea King disappears in a cloud of sand - the technical term is recirculation: the down-draught generated by the rotor blades causes the sand to

To observers from outside looking in, the helicopter has all but vanished. To those inside the cab, the outside world has all but vanished.

"It's like flying in thick fog," says Lt Cdr Dave Lambourne.

"Landing on sand is degreelevel flying. Doing it at night, it demands absolutely phenomenal skill.

"The three weeks in Spain were very, very hard work. Long, irregular hours, hot, high, and a very challenging environment in which to fly, but excellent training."

By the end of August, 771 had clocked up 450 hours on 210 training exercises with the Baggers.

That's on top of ensuring there's at least one helicopter sitting on the tarmac at 15 minutes' notice to fly by day, 45 minutes' by night, on emergency duties... plus the training of new aircrew

There's also been the small matter of moving from its old buildings/hangar (D1, formerly home of 810 NAS) to D2 next door (once used by 706 NAS for readers who can remember that far

"We've not had an uplift in people and no additional aircraft to assist with the training. But we were the only squadron available to conduct the training and everyone has risen to the challenge," says Lt Cdr Finn.

You cannot squeeze all those extra hours into the 771 schedule without some 'give'.

Eight cabs and 180 men and women can only do so much. The result is that training new aircrew (typically 32 a year) has slowed down.

The focus for the remainder of the year is to address the backlog in training - 'train to regain' - every hour flown must have training value and that includes the tasking.

There's certainly been no give on the SAR front. In all of 2008, the Sea King Mk5s were scrambled 201 times. In the first eight months of this year they'd flown 235 sorties (and saved 222 lives).

Still, all that flying does have its bonuses...

This year five 771 aircrew passed impressive milestones: CO Lt Cdr Finn, CPO(ACMN) Dave Rigg, PO(ACMN) Jason Bibby (3,000 hours apiece), Lt Cdr Dave Lambourne (5,000 hours), and Lt Cdr Stan Burgess (7,000 hours) - "He joined up with Uncle Albert," his colleagues

quip. That's 21,000 flying hours among the five of them; CPO Rigg also celebrated earning the Queen's Gallantry Medal for his part in a gruelling rescue from a Spanish trawler 12 months ago.

"Because it's a '700' squadron it's often viewed as a respite from frontline operations. But the hours that we work, the tempo are just as great," says ex-Jungly aircrewman CPO 'Soapy' Warters.

Every hour in the sky demands up to a dozen 'man hours' on the ground maintaining the Sea King.

"With a Sea King there are no new snags. We have seen it all before," says WO2 Barney Buckland, 771's senior maintenance rating.

"It's not the amount of flying which women in the Ace of Clubs. has made the difference rather the places we've been flying in.

"We were lucky in that two of our guys" had experience with CHF - most of the engineers have spent their careers with 771 and 849."

At their lowest, temperatures in Bardufoss (half-way between Narvik and Tromsø) reached -46°C (-50°F). Anything below -20°C and you have to heat the gearboxes before you use

"For us it's been something we don't do - anything away from the norm is good," the senior rate continues.

> "It was essential that the lads knew the part they played in defence. It was important to sit down with the maintainers and explain to them why we were going to Norway or Spain, and show a presentation of those killed in Afghanistan. After that, noone complained about working

long, odd hours." And lest we forget there are those rescue missions which day in, day out, the squadron flies. It is the most demanding flying outside a war

zone. "SAR can be very demanding testing people and aircraft to their limit. You see people with awful injuries but it is a very rewarding job," said Lt Cdr Lambourne.

"And you are flying at extremes. If something's going to happen, it's going to happen at night, in the worst weather, 200 miles away."

For many units, that one duty would be enough. Throw in student aircrew and front-line training and you can see why Lt Cdr Finn is proud of the men and

"We have raised the bar with what we do this year."





LIFE in the 'goldfish bowl' - there's an Apache wanting to take off in front of you, a Hawk making practice approaches on the runway, there's a Hercules revving up to go on one side, and a train of fire trucks and support vehicles waiting to race across one runway to take up station by the crash barrier. Then the emergency call

comes in for the SAR Sea King... Not to mention down in the bowels of the Control Tower where there are lined up Talkdown, Director, Approach and Zone, each parcelling up different parts of the overhead airspace and the aircraft passing through, taking off and landing.

This is the realm of the military Air Traffic Controllers - men and women from the Navy and RAF train alongside each other at RAF Shawbury near the Welsh border.

And this year brings the strongest presence yet of dark blue at the Central Air Traffic Control School - in terms both of students and instructors. (Anyone would think that the future carriers are coming...)

The recurrent theme at CATCS is being able to think in 3D. Although to be honest, that's an understatement. Having seen the unfortunate unspooling of one scenario during a big assessment trial, you need to be able to add the fourth dimension of time as well.

There is a range of simulators at the site which recreate the tasks of ATCs in control towers at airbases around the world, as well as banks of screens that flex the advanced ATC muscles of those who will go on to control military aircraft at civilian sites such as National Air Traffic Services control centre near Swanwick in Hampshire.

And so, a flat screen of coloured lines is transformed into a mental landscape of runways and hilltops, and callsigns and squawks, heights and headings.

"Charlie Tango Delta Two Two, Cottam Tower, roger approved, straight in approach, runway Two Five, righthand, QFE 1022..."

This cryptic code is carefully noted onto strips of white paper that guard the intentions of the yellow marks on screen for when the identifying radar inevitably (for exercise) collapses.

> It's a stripped down language in use here no wasting time on definite articles like 'the' terse commands deliver precise instructions from controller to aircraft. (Although in

Shawbury the 'aircraft' are a team of civilian 'drivers' who sit behind the scenes piloting their fictional aircraft around computer screens.)

"It's like learning a foreign language," said PO Paul 'Holly' Hollyoake, one of the trainees undergoing the 28-week Joint Air Traffic Control Course (JATCC). "You're subjected to aviation lingo from day one, so it's part of the

way of life here." The trainees are a mixture of senior rates and officers – as would be found in military control towers. The instructors - all military or ex-military also reflect this unconventional grouping.

Lt Cdr Kev Woolsey is the Senior Naval Instructor at the school. He's frank about what happens next for Naval people who train in Shawbury: "What this place is is an extended aptitude test for real controlling. It's enough for you to say you've proven yourself thus far. Now you're ready to go off to do the real thing.

"You can't expect someone who wants to be a pilot

to fly a fast jet straightaway.

"This is one of those professions which you can be responsible for an awful lot of things that can go wrong very quickly."

"We need a grounded individual who responds well under pressure. After all, you are controlling

It's an interesting mix that start out together at the ATC school - some junior officers are fresh from Dartmouth, some are experienced air crew moving on from flying themselves; the senior rates have served their time as Aircraft Controllers, looking after helicopters on the back of ships and watching over the aircraft out on a mission, or arrive at the school after a sideways jump from the warfare branch.

"The ACs have greater challenges early on, but if you've got the aptitude and the gumption and you will need both - it is a way of really unlocking several avenues of advancement,' said Lt Cdr Woolsey.

PO 'Mac' McDougall commented: "To come up here to do JATCC is a completely different world. Control at sea is totally different – at sea for all intents and purposes, it's just you.

"Up here there's more interaction with other units

- civvy, London Mil. There's so much more going on. The job as a Leading Aircraft Controller on board is more tactical, dealing with submarines, etc."

He laughed: "Controlling at sea is a damn sight easier than here or at a station."

And the arrival of HM Ships Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales is driving forward a pressing need for ATCs - the current carriers demand three or four, the future carriers will need up to 15 people

PO Hollyoake stressed: "The future carrier will be very much like a control tower at an air station but on a floating platform.

"I'd advise anybody to come and give it a go. It opens your eyes up."

Anybody interested in Air Traffic Control or Aircraft Controlling should contact their career manager or AFCO.





DON'T look down.

Enjoying a stunning bird's eye view of Turkey's TCG Gediz and an AB212 helicopter from Greece's HS Navarinon are the ship's flight of Her Majesty's Ship Cornwall in their Lynx.

Somewhere off the Horn of Africa, the ships of NATO's Standing Maritime Group 2 led by the RN from flagship Cornwall - converged for an anti-piracy sweep, Operation Ocean Shield.

It's working. But don't take our word for it, take the word of the Fighting 99 herself.

"There has now not been

a successful hijacking in the Gulf of Aden in over three months," says Lt Cdr Alex Kendrick, Cornwall's weapon officer, engineer proudly. To be sure part of

the reason for that was the monsoon season keeping the skiffs and dhows used by Somali pirates in port.

But now that season has passed - and attacks have not picked up.

"So far, with the deterrence provided by ships such as Cornwall, there has only been a limited increase in activity by the pirates in the Gulf of Aden, and this has been easily dealt with by the patrolling surveillance aircraft and warships," says Lt Cdr Kendrick.

"Those pirates that have tried their luck have fared poorly as the multi-national forces work together to deter, intercept and disrupt them."

From September 1 to October 1 Cornwall was continuously at sea, beginning in Dubai (where she underwent mid-deployment maintenance) and ending in Port Victoria in the Seychelles, adding 8,186 miles to a tachometer which is approaching 650,000 miles steamed in 21 years' service.

The bridge team thought at first it was a record (it wasn't quite according to the F99's

documents).

But it is, says navigator Doug Owen, proof of the relentless nature of the anti-piracy

mission.

"It's testimony to the nature of this task - and the huge distances covered to provide an effective deterrence," he adds.

While much of the security effort is focused on the 'transit corridor' - a 500-mile-long strip of the Gulf of Aden through

which merchantmen are advised to pass, the NATO group's theatre of operations covers two million square miles of ocean (that's seven times - ish - the size of the North Sea).

Four ships join Cornwall in the NATO effort (HMS Cumberland is also in the region as part of the CTF 150 task group): Gediz, Navarinon, USS Donald Cook and Italy's ITS Libeccio.

"There is a huge amount of assets committed to the counterpiracy operations now, but for us to be truly effective and keep

the merchant ships safe coordination is the key," explains Cdre Steve Chick who's directing the NATO effort from Cornwall.

"There has been a determined effort by involved everyone in protecting the merchant traffic here to make the most efficient use of the ships and aircraft available, and we have forged very close

working relationships with my counterparts in the various national and multi-national task ·groups around us.

"The result is a clear improvement in our success rate against the pirates compared to last year."

What's made the big difference in 2009 compared with 2008 is the sheer scale of . the anti-piracy mission - and not just by the typical players. China, Japan, India, Russia -

all have dispatched warships or task groups. Even Luxembourg has become involved in the mission, not, of course, sending any ships, but providing a patrol aircraft.

"Having a clear, common goal in terms of beating the pirates to safeguard innocent seafarers: is a worthy objective in any language. The natural bond.



of mariners that transcends nationalities has seen a marvellous unity of effort," Cdre Chick adds.

"We now need to build confidence in the maritime trade community.

"By taking adequate precautions against piracy, the vast majority of vessels are now able to safely transit the area without even seeing a pirate.

"It is also important that the local fishing and coastal trade is allowed to flourish: the long term solution to piracy is inextricably linked to economic and political stability in Somalia to allow the rule of law ashore.

"The ocean is one of the few resources offering a stable and legitimate livelihood: we must ensure that law abiding local boat crews are allowed to go freely about their business."

The demanding month at sea also saw a visit to Cornwall by the new Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Admiral Sir Trevor Soar (who regards Type 22s as his favourite ships...).

CINC (pictured below in khaki with Cdre Chick) was on. a whistle-stop tour of Senior Service ships and units deployed to the Middle East (which meant a visit to another of his favourite 22s, Cumberland). The visit to F99, conducted

while on patrol along the 'transit corridor' in the Gulf of Aden, gave the admiral a real insight into how the conduct of counter-

SNMG 2

piracy operations has developed as well as the thoughts and views of the ship's company now well into... the second half of their NATO deployment.

As her marathon month drew to a close, Cornwall crossed the for Christmas. Equator for the first

time in the deployment, necessitating a visit from King Neptune and his court in order company to his realm.

and women had never crossed the imaginary line before and so had to go before King Neptune (who bore an uncanny resemblance to one WO2ET(ME)
Taff Cadwallader; the senior rate could not be found during the ceremony).

Nor were the commodore's staff spared the ritual: staff officers from Germany, Greece, Italy, Turkey and the USA all enjoyed a break from demanding operations (their boss, however, had already crossed the Equator

during his lengthy career). Cornwall is now coming to the end of her time on station east of Suez and will be heading back through the Mediterranean this month to be home in time

That brings the curtain down on eight months with the NATO task group and her time as Neptune and his court in order Cdre Chick's flagship: HMS to welcome many of the ship's Chatham will be taking up the flagship mantle in the new year More than 160 Cornishmen : as the force re-forms for future operations.













COLOSSUS, Leviathan, Conqueror, Dreadnought, Defiance and Thunderer; ships with a heart of oak which saw Nelson's plans for Trafalgar through to overwhelming victory.

Ships with names which resonate with power and aggression or evoke classical

And then there was Pickle, a six-gun schooner with a comical name which served as the general dogsbody, dwarfed even by the frigates which themselves were not strong enough to join a fleet

But Pickle has her own special place in Naval folklore, even though that fame was granted to her just 35 years ago.

Pickle was neither a Naval Ship (which, at the turn of the 19th century, had to be commanded by an RN Captain) nor even a ship, as she did not have three masts and was not square-rigged.

The fact she was a schooner places the likely location of her builder as the American seaboard or the Caribbean, as this type of vessel was never common in the Royal Navy.

She was bought in 1800 by Vice Admiral Lord Hugh Seymour, Commander-in-Chief in Jamaica, who wanted a tender for his flagship Sans Pareil, and who handed over £2,500 for the 125-ton craft, originally named the Sting.

The fact that the Navy Board had refused him permission did not bother the dashing, wealthy and very well-connected peer, who counted the Prince of Wales among his chums.

The Sting, built in 1799, had a complement of 40 sailors, and replaced the worm-ridden fleet tender Pickle, taking over the tasks of carrying despatches, stores and personnel to outlying ships and shore bases.

The Admiralty Board, thwarted over the vessel's purchase, was further snubbed



 A 1995 replica of the Pickle, built in Poland, which featured heavily in the Trafalgar 200 programme four years ago

renamed Pickle, presumably to hide her presence from the prying eyes of their mortal foes at the Treasury, but Sting she remained until early 1802.

By that time, under the command of Lt Thomas Thrush, she had carried Sir Hugh's body back to England after his over her name - they had ordered she be death from yellow fever in 1801 and been

refitted for Channel service.

An alternative version has the Pickle as being a West Country merchant vessel which was bought and fitted out for the Navy - the obfuscation over her acquisition, and a lack of crucial documents, makes either story possible.

Whatever her origin, Pickle's patch storms in Torbay.

was from the Solent to Land's End, and although the wars with France were in a lull, there were still smugglers to chase.

In 1802 Pickle's beat was switched to the Bristol Channel, though in the autumn of that year she was sent with despatches to the Mediterranean, where she dallied until February 1803.

On returning to the UK in the spring of 1803 she recommissioned, and Lt John Richards Lapenotière was in charge when she joined the fleet off Ushant for the close blockade of Brest.

There she suffered the only fatality of her entire Naval career, when OS James Staner fell overboard on June 6.

The blockade became her station for the next 18 months - a miserable time for the crew of a ship built for speed in the Caribbean, not coastal work in the storms of the Atlantic and English Channel.

She was worked very hard, occasionally running messages to squadrons off Ferrol, Corunna and Rochefort, and it would appear that Lapenotière was not the Navy's greatest seaman or leader.

During his 41 months in command, Pickle lost or sprang her bowsprit or jib boom seven times and suffered major damage to other spars, while on three occasions the officer was obliged to heave some of Pickle's guns overboard to prevent a catastrophe.

On average half his crew deserted each year and the number of floggings was notably high - none of her other commanding officers so much as let the cat out of the bag, or saw the vessel suffer such damage.

So it was not a happy schooner, although at least some of the blame must lie with her situation - between May 1803 and December 1804 she was at sea nearly 70 per cent of the time, the rest being split between refit and repair, time at anchor off Plymouth or sheltering from winter

Her blockade work was in the main tedious, including collecting the weekly accounts from the ships of the fleet, but on occasions Pickle was sent into the lion's den.

She regularly went into the mouth of Brest harbour to count the French men o' war, and once landed a party there to destroy a telegraph installation - an incident which C S Forester incorporated into a Hornblower story.

Her greatest feat - to date - was in March 1804, when the 74-gun Magnificent was wrecked on the Pierre Noir reef off Brest, and Pickle played a pivotal role in the rescue of the entire crew of the stricken third-rate.

The schooner spent the following winter in the Caribbean, then refitted in Plymouth before resuming the role of dogsbody over the summer, flitting to and fro between Devonport, the British fleet off Finisterre and Nelson's fleet off Cadiz.

Her ship's company at the time was a typical mix of mariners - a mix of Englishmen, Irishmen, Americans, a Scot, a Welshman, a Channel Islander and a Norwegian.

She was still with Nelson when Blackwood's frigates spotted the Franco-Spanish fleet put to sea on October 19.

During the Battle of Trafalgar Pickle stayed to windward of Nelson's column of ships then scurried about doing what good she could - including an act of particular heroism (see below).

By the time the fighting subsided Pickle's doctor, Assistant Surgeon Mr Britton, was able to offer his assistance to Surgeon Beatty in the Victory for three days.

Pickle rode out the storm that threatened oblivion to the battered wooden walls then, with prisoners offloaded, Lt Lapenotière was summoned to Admiral Collingwood's temporary flagship Euryalus.

Nelson's successor had another little job for the Pickle...

Modern source for Pickle Night

BEING chosen to convey news of a fleet victory home was, to a junior officer in Nelson's navy, akin to a Lottery win.

As the ships-of-the-line clashed off Cape Trafalgar, Lt Lapenotière's prospects were diminishing as fast as those of the Franco-Spanish Fleet.

Aged 35, in command of a tiny unrated vessel and little prospect of promotion, Lapenotière could only envisage more time as the fleet's SLJO - silly little jobs officer - then the Georgian equivalent of a P45.

But the man who passed glad tidings of success to the Admiralty in London could expect a windfall £500 was the going rate,
 equivalent to several years' pay -

and promotion as well as fame,

temporary or otherwise. That sort of plum job would normally fall to a frigate captain, the most obvious candidate being the brilliant Henry Blackwood of

the Euryalus. But Collingwood, Nelson's successor, regarded Blackwood as indispensable in the event of further enemy activity, so the choice of messenger was between Pickle or the even-smaller Entreprenante, the fleet's other dogsbody.

With the latter operating inshore rescuing sailors from battered prize ships, Lapenotière hit the jackpot.

At noon on October 26, Pickle set sail for England with all speed - in her case, a paltry four knots to six knots.

Lapenotière's dreams of money and fame began to crumble when the sloop Nautilus joined Pickle, and her captain, Cdr John Sykes, took it upon himself (as the more senior officer) to ensure the despatches from Collingwood got through to the Admiralty.

The Nautilus was a much more seaworthy vessel, and as she disappeared over the horizon, so too did Lapenotière's hopes.

But three days later, on November 2, Nautilus ran into a powerful French squadron out PICKLE Night, as Royal Navy traditions go, is barely out of

The event dates back 35 years this month, to HMS Nelson in Portsmouth, when the president of the Senior Rates Mess asked the Commodore of the Royal Naval Barracks for permission to celebrate Trafalgar Night, quite reasonably wondering why the officers should get all the good parties.

Commodore John Lea supported the idea, but could see a problem - high-profile guests could be in short supply around October 21.

The Commodore suggested they celebrate the arrival of the news of the battle two weeks later, on or around November 6, allowing 'special guests' to recover after the rigours of Trafalgar Night. The rest is history...

of Lorient and she was forced to retrace her route to avoid a suicidal encounter.

The lost time allowed Pickle to pass her – the schooner never even spotted the enemy - and instead of battling contrary winds in the Channel, Lapenotière went ashore at Fish Strand Quay in Falmouth, 40 miles short of Plymouth.

Warming to his role as bearer of good (and bad) news, Lapenotière announced the victory at Trafalgar, and the death of Nelson, to those who happened to be on the quay, then began a 266-mile journey to London by post chaise - a huge gamble, as the cost of such a trip was equivalent to half a lieutenant's annual pay.

Nautilus put into Plymouth 12 hours later and Sykes, possibly with an eye to the potential riches, also hired a post chaise.

The paths of the two men converged at Honiton, so Sykes would have known he was behind Lapenotière, but the race continued as each man headed from town to town - in Lapenotière's case, requiring 19 changes of horses.

The lieutenant was even denied a triumphal entry to London; the last two hours were at walking pace because of thick fog, and it was past midnight on November 6, 37 hours after leaving Falmouth, that the officer met the Secretary of the Admiralty, William Marsden, who was often to be found burning the midnight oil.

Having found and woken the First Lord, Lord Barham, Marsden set wheels in motion to spread the news and have it published - in the middle of which, an hour too late, Sykes reached the Admiralty.

The next morning Lapenotière was tidied up and taken to Windsor, where - using cutlery over breakfast - the officer described the battle to King George III.

The King gave Lapenotiere the silver muffineer (sugar or spice shaker) which the officer had used to represent Victory in his tabletop recreation of the battle.

But more to the point, Lapenotière was also promoted to commander, given a sword worth 100 guineas from the Patriotic Fund, received a share of prize money from the battle, and though only after three petitioning letters - bagged the £500 bounty for bringing the news to London.

He even had his travel expenses reimbursed.

His career reinvigorated, Lapenotière was given a slightly bigger vessel to command, and eventually made post-captain in 1811, but his time in the limelight was by that time long past.

He died in the bosom of his family in Cornwall in early 1842. Pickle did not survive nearly so long.

She had three more years of escort work, blockades and patrolling, usually off Ushant but with at least one foray to the Caribbean, and one more moment of glory.

In January 1807 she captured a French privateer with a complement twice the size of her own.

But barely 18 months later, in July 1808, her new captain, Lt

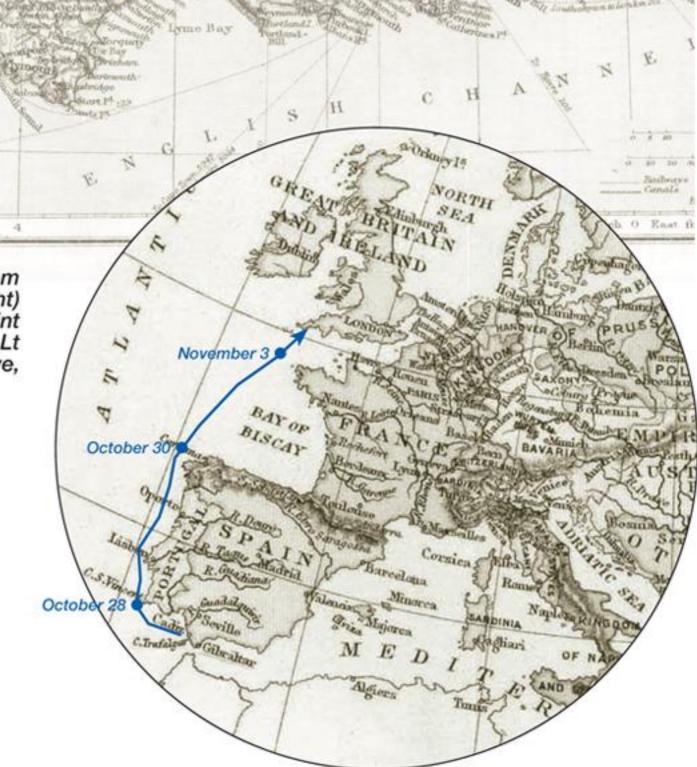
 HMS Pickle's voyage from Cape Trafalgar to Falmouth (right) was followed by a 37-hour sprint on November 4-6 1805 by Lt Lapenotiere to the Admiralty (above, showing changes of horses)

Moses Cannadey, grounded her on a shoal approaching Cadiz.

The crew took to the boats and all survived, but Pickle quickly filled with water and sank.

A Union Jack which is believed to be the last surviving flag flown at the Battle of Trafalgar was due to be sold at auction as Navy News went to press.

The flag, flown on HMS Spartiate and presented by the ship's crew to Lt James Clephan, is to be sold by Charles Miller Ltd on Trafalgar Day, and has an estimated sale price of up to £15,000.



Schooner relishes challenge

PICKLE had no part to play in the outcome of Trafalgar - her 48lb broadside was one 25th of that of HMS Victory, for example. Even a frigate had eight times her destructive power.

So Pickle and the other dogsbody, Entreprenante, stood back and watched as the battle unfolded.

Around 4pm the French 74-gun Achille came under attack from HMS Prince, whose broadsides ignited a fire in the shrouds and sails.

Attempts by French seamen to quell the blaze were foiled by a further broadside, and as her seacocks were opened to flood her hull the crew began to abandon ship.

Despite the risk of a massive explosion, Pickle and Entreprenante moved in, along with boats from HMS Swiftsure, to pick up survivors from the water.

Among them was Jeanne Caunant, who was found

almost naked, burned on her neck and shoulders by molten lead, clinging to floating debris.

Jeanne was later reunited with her husband, a maintopman in Achille.

In all Pickle saved more than 150 French sailors from drowning as the Achille burned fiercely from stem to stern, loaded cannon cooking off and scattering shot across the sea as she went about her task.

And as the British ships withdrew, carrying their former enemies to safety, Achille finally succumbed to the flames at around 5.30pm, the explosion creating a sobering finale to the diminuendo of a waning battle long won by the Royal Navy.

With thanks to lain MacKenzie at the Naval Historical Branch; The Ships of Trafalgar by Peter Goodwin was also consulted

The future of remembrance

LYING on the altar of the Armed Forces Memorial is a wreath with a uniquely poignant history.

Not simply a universal symbol of remembrance, this wreath was the one borne by Harry Patch at last year's Armistice Day ceremony in London.

Harry, the last Tommy to have served in the trenches of World War 1, died at the age of 111 in July – just a week after RN veteran Henry Allingham, aged 113.

And with the passing of those two veterans a chapter is all but closed – the last known Briton to have served in the Great War is now former Naval rating Claude Choules (108), who moved to Australia in 1926.

Harry's wreath is a tangible reminder of the old soldier, and neatly represents the handing on of responsibility for remembrance.

But as the generations come and go the nature of remembrance itself must change.

Retired Naval officer Cdr Charlie Bagot Jewitt, Chief Executive Officer at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA), and his team are putting a great deal of effort into understanding this shift – remembrance is, after all, the raison d'être of the Arboretum, at Alrewas in Staffordshire.

Those inquiries underpin the £8 million appeal which was launched by Prince William in April with the aim of making the Arboretum into a "world-class"

centre for remembrance".

A key objective of the appeal is to provide better facilities – particularly under cover – for the 300,000 people who visit the Arboretum each year.

But the NMA is also looking at the nuts and bolts of remembrance, calling in academics and experts who meet regularly to examine the issues.

Two themes have been studied recently, said Cdr Bagot Jewitt – overseas perspectives and the role of the media.

"First, the foreign perspective. We looked at remembrance in the United States, Germany and Rwanda – the latter which brings it up to date – and how people handle it," he said.

"One of the problems is that in the UK since World War 2 we have had a really common view with regards national memory, which makes it easier.

"There is one accepted general version of events, though there are obviously variations in the details.

"If you have conflicts which do not enjoy widespread national support you can understand the whole business of remembrance can get difficult, particularly in the cases of the individual and the family.

"That is a lesson for the future.

"The second theme was all about the media and remembrance, including being faced with what's going up on the web on sites such as MySpace and Facebook, dedicated



Future Foundations Appeal

websites on 24 hours a day, with positive and negative comments.

"There is also the role of the media in colouring our perception of history – for example, In Which We Serve, The Cruel Sea and such like have done more to colour our ideas of war at sea since World War 2 than anything else.

"The power of story and the power of film can be as important in commemoration in the national psyche as the memories of Granddad, who has gone, so you cannot talk to him any more."

So the other main objective of the appeal is to fulfil the NMA's remit to educate and interpret for future generations.

"We are looking at a very exciting development," said Cdr Bagot Jewitt, citing the new interpretation centre at the site of the Battle of Culloden in Scotland as an example of what can be achieved.

He said the focus would still be on conflict and commemoration since World War 2, with the aim of bringing it alive and creating that bridge between generations.

The NMA offers a wide range of educational possibilities; besides the historical aspects there are the wider humanities (war poetry, songs, imagery), citizenship (what makes the British British) and even sciences – the Arboretum encourages use of its attractive riverside grounds for wildlife studies.

Meanwhile the core business of remembrance gathers pace.

"It's just phenomenal here

– we have had two applications for
memorials today alone," said Cdr
Bagot Jewitt.

"We have got about 160 substantial stone memorials here, then there are the dedicated trees and so on.

"It is probably about 80/20 between military and civilian – most people who want to commemorate are military, but there are others, for firefighters, police, the RNLI and so on.

"If a national organisation has a reason for commemorating, then they can do it here."

Cheques made payable to the National Memorial Arboretum can be sent to: Cdr Charles Bagot Jewitt, NMA Future Foundations Appeal, Appeal Office, 1 Fitzgerald Road, London SW14 8HA.

www.thenma.org.uk

● Clockwise from top: a wreath is laid at the Armed Forces Memorial; Cdr Charlie Bagot Jewitt (Retd), Chief Executive Officer of the National Memorial Arboretum; the proposed new entrance to the Arboretum; dawn at the Armed Forces Memorial; thousands of bikers attend this year's Ride to the Wall, raising money for the Arboretum as well as paying tribute to the fallen; an aerial view of the Memorial













POWER range testing of HMS Astute's nuclear reactor means the boat has 'gone live' – and brings her first trip 'home' a little closer.

The reactor trials started in September, and are among the final battery of tests to be undertaken before Astute leaves the BAE Systems yard at Barrowin-Furness for sea trials.

Capt John Corderoy, Superintendent Fleet maintenance at Clyde Naval Base, said: "Starting power range testing is a significant milestone and a fantastic achievement for all those involved with the Astute programme.

"Clyde's 'readiness to receive Astute' has been checked by our regulator and we are 'good to go'.

"I have now no doubt that HMS Astute will be up here this year, and soon we will be at the start of a busy and exciting period as we learn more about the submarine and work with BAE to support her through her sea trials period."

Astute and her sisters are powered by the new Core H reactor, which is designed to last for the boats' 25-year life span without the need for expensive and technically-complex refuelling.

The new class of hunter-killer boats will use a purpose-built jetty at Faslane.

The £150 million 200metre Valiant Jetty was built at Greenock on the Clyde and towed around a dozen miles to Faslane in May this year.

Although designed specifically for Astutes, Valiant Jetty can also handle the Navy's other classes of conventionally-armed nuclear submarines, the S and T-boats.



 CLM training at Tal-y-Bont brings a smile to the faces of sailors from HMS Tireless

Tireless efforts reap rewards

WHILE submarine HMSTireless undergoes extended maintenance in Devonport, members of her crew have been setting themselves challenges ashore.

An 11-strong team was the only RN entry in the annual Nijmegan Marches in the Netherlands, the biggest event of its kind in the world.

Taking place over four days and covering 166km, the event – which began in 1909 – attracts military and civilian teams from across the globe.

PO Bailey set up the team, which started training with a gentle 15-mile stroll along the Plym Valley cycle path on a wet February morning and quickly built up to an 80km practice march at RAF Cosford carrying the required 10kg deadweight plus food and water – winning an award in the process.

They then upped the pace until they were ready to join their 840 or so British compatriots – the largest of all foreign military contingents – at the opening ceremony, with LS Helyer leading them in.

Tireless was one of the last teams to leave, but overcame the heat and humidity to reach the end of day one intact – 473 of the 40,645 entrants dropped out on the first day, with a further 1,784 the next day.

Tireless saw two members fall by the wayside with injuries, but with sapping heat and humidity followed by heavy rain, the team sang songs to maintain morale – the 'Voice of Tireless' caused many a civvy team to look over their shoulders then move aside for the deeps to march through.

Day four proved particularly gruelling, but the submariners dug deep to finish and collect their medals.



 Team Tireless carries the White Ensign at the Nijmegan Marches in the Netherlands

Closer to home, 16 senior and junior rates travelled to the Brecon Beacons for a stint of Command Leadership and Management (CLM) training in the great Welsh outdoors.

They arrived at Tal-y-Bont with a fair bit of preparation behind them, and there was no time to hang about – having left Plymouth early on Monday morning, by early afternoon they were undertaking a navigation exercise high above a reservoir.

The rest of the week saw a combination of tough physical challenges (climbing and hiking with backpacks is not natural submariner territory) along with mental stimulus, including the need to deliver a five-minute presentation.

There were also disaster exercises and a transit through 'Dark Element' – a pitch-black 800m disused railway tunnel.

With the formal part of the course over, the deeps 'relaxed' with caving, climbing and kayaking, while an evening at the local pub brought an unexpected treat as Wales and Lions rugby star Andy Powell chatted to them on a range of subjects including the importance of excellent leadership on the recent tour to South Africa.

All these new skills, teamwork and the much-extolled grit will now be applied to the regeneration process as Tireless emerges from the hands of the technicians and prepares for a return to operations next year.

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Back in the saude

Canada. Brazil. Turkey. The United States. Germany. France. Norway. Australia. Denmark. Sweden. New Zealand. India.

You might be thinking: line-up for next year's

World Cup finals.

And you'd be wrong. But if you guessed: participants in a massive war game off the Scottish coast, well, you'd be spot on.

Did I write Scotland? Sorry, I meant Caledonia, with the forces of Dragonia massing offshore, poised to strike.

Yes the days of Brownia and Mustardia, those fictitious nations forever at loggerheads, are over (replaced by Caledonia and Dragonia, although they're also forever at loggerheads).

But that's not the only change to Joint Warrior, the major exercise run twice a year in the UK.

Indeed, the last time the Navy News team pitched up for Joint Warrior it was a Joint Maritime Course (and there are still plenty in the RN who refer, not necessarily lovingly, to 'JMCs').

Since then it's gone through two name changes, first Neptune Warrior - 'warrior' reflecting the



A Naval Strike Wing pilot climbs out of the cockpit of his Harrier GR9 after a sortie over the Hebrides during the largest military exercise in the UK this year. Eighteen warships from around the globe, led by Britain's flagship HMS Illustrious, converged on north-west Scotland for Joint Warrior. RICHARD HARGREAVES reports.

non-nautical aspects of the exercise - now Joint Warrior (because 'Neptune' was apparently a bit too nautical for some).

No longer is the exercise 'just' confined to Cape Wrath and the waters of north-west Scotland. These days, it casts its net over Wales, the Moray Firth and Northumberland, not least because it means the RAF doesn't have to spend time flying over the Highlands to reach its target.

And joint though Joint Warrior is - there are nearly 40 aircraft and 500 troops involved in the latest exercise - there's a hell of a lot of naval involvement: 18 international warships and auxiliaries, three submarines, a dozen helicopters, a couple of tugs... and four jetskis (for fast-attack

craft training rather than fun).

It falls to flagship HMS Illustrious, safeguarded by frigates Northumberland and Portland, to lead the RN involvement, while HM Ships Shoreham, Penzance and Bangor search for mines, and HMS Trafalgar stalks beneath the waves.

The emphasis for this Joint Warrior – 092, 09 is the year and it's the second Joint Warrior of 2009 - is carrier strike, the ability to protect a carrier task force from threats on, beneath and above the waves, and to strike at one's enemies.

"We have a 'golf club bag' of scenarios and pick out the clubs we need," explains Lt Cdr Jo Webber, one of the planning staff (more about them later).

The 'golf clubs' for this Joint Warrior 092 are plucked out of history books old and new: ethnic groups separated from their mother country. oppressed by the other peoples of the land they live in while their kinfolk sabre rattle and demand restitution (think the 'Polish Corridor' in the late 30s or the former Yugoslavia two decades ago).

And that's why the Dragonian fleet, led by DNS (Dragonian Naval Ship) Illustrious (she even has the Dragonian flag, although she's not flying it) is steaming around threateningly off the Caledonian coast.

Aboard Lusty, for the third time this year, are the Harrier GR9s of the Naval Strike Wing. With commitments in Afghanistan now over, we're seeing the jump jets back at sea far more often.

Seven Harriers from Cottesmore have joined the carrier, accompanied by 13 pilots and some 140 staff and ground crew.

What the Strike Wing possesses in abundance is combat experience. "Everyone who deployed to Afghanistan used ordnance, all in support of our troops on the ground who were taking a clobbering," says Lt Cdr Paul Tremelling,

La Continued on page 26







Continued from page 25

Commander A Flight.

"You could hear them shouting, you could hear them taking fire. That's an experience you can never forget."

He has more than 1,000-plus hours in the jump jet under his belt. Many of his fellow Harrier pilots are also 'old hands' when it comes to life on a carrier with more than 150 deck landings over their careers...

... and some of the Naval Strike Wing fliers have perhaps 20 deck landings to their name.

"The nuts and bolts of landing on a deck is something you can teach quite easily," says Lt Cdr Tremelling.

"What you cannot teach, however, is everything else - all the cogs and wheels which make up life on board.

"You realise how much more time everything takes. It's a good hour from finishing your mission briefing to heading up the ramp. It's the squeezing through hatches with all your kit, the time it takes between decks.'

His boss Cdr Dave 'Tinsel' (no, we don't know the story behind the nickname either) Lindsay, CO of the Naval Strike Wing, adds: "This is experience you cannot buy: working on a busy deck in weather which isn't the greatest. For us it's great."

It's not only the pilots who need reminding about life on a Harrier carrier.

"One of the lads walked out on to deck to put some ring bolts on - as another jet was moving," says Lt Cdr Tremelling. "One of the other guys

grabbed him just in the nick of time."

NOW it's fair to say that we can become a bit bedazzled by the Harriers. But it's not all about the

No, there are two Bagger Sea Kings (849 NAS), one Lynx (815 NAS) and two Merlins (814 NAS) also aboard Illustrious.

With the Flying Tigers spending a lot of their time in the Middle East, this is the first time at sea for many of 814 NAS' deck handlers.

Not so LAET Phil Froude. This is his fourth time on Illustrious, but after a year and a half away from the carrier, he too is finding the experience useful.

"You forget how hard it is to integrate with the other squadrons. It really does complicate things on the deck. Everyone wants air time, but space on the deck is limited."

stands people in good stead

when the real thing comes."

- Lt Cdr Nick Pomfrett

wants "It's not the real thing, but it Everyone air time - but there is a pecking order. "Everything stops for the Harriers," says LAET Froude.

This is the largest and most diverse air group

Illustrious has hosted for some time.

It's just what Commander Air, Cdr Mark Deller, wants to see. "You have to keep the deck 'warm', keeping up the skills of the guys," he points out.

The deck is warm. Very. Three waves - that's four Harriers apiece – are launched daily. The Sea Kings and Merlins are also airborne almost constantly. The Lynx buzzes around on various duties, and a civilian Sikorski regular drops in ferrying mail and

"With the number of movements there are on Illustrious during Joint Warrior, we're doing what a 10,000 foot runway would do," Cdr Deller says.

"We cannot ignore one squadron and focus on another. Everyone has to work together. We have to work as hard supporting the Sea Kings and Merlins as we do looking after the jets.

"It's about linking the pieces of the jigsaw together. We have to make use of these few weeks and cram everything in."

Which they do with aplomb. And not just Lusty.

EVERYBODY crams as much as they can into Joint Warrior: air attacks, bombing raids, reconnaissance missions, live gunnery, suicide boat attacks, counter-piracy operations, submarine hunting, there are prospective submarine commanders undergoing the Perisher, there's the challenge of working with Allied warships - a sizeable US and

Canadian presence inter alia, plus for the first time, a Brazilian warship, Defensora.

And all this is choreographed by just two dozen people, the Joint Tactical Exercise Planning Staff (JTEPS).

The staff have more than 60 years' experience to draw on - Joint Warrior traces its heritage back to the end of WW2 and anti-submarine exercises.

Things have changed a bit since then... For anyone who's been through Operational Sea

Training with FOST (which should be about 99.9 per cent of the Fleet) a couple of things stand out about Joint Warrior.

Firstly, it's far more open ended - it's not as prescriptive, there's not always war on a Thursday. Anything can happen in the next half hour...

And secondly, the training is driven by the units. They tell the planners what they want and the staff decide how best to give that training.

"We don't do this for ourselves. We do it for the ships and units who demand the training," Cdr Chris Dyke, deputy director maritime points out.

Submarine staff officer Lt Cdr Nick Pomfrett adds: "The idea is that the ships and the boats get the best training out of this. There's a Perisher student on Trafalgar having a miserable - or maybe a fun – evening right now with a task group hunting him."

He is.

In the submarine planning office, a computer map of north-west Scotland jerkily updates every minute or so as a host of frigates converge on HMS Trafalgar.

"It's a bit of a bun fight," Lt Cdr Pomfrett points out. "It's not the real thing, but it stands people in good stead when the real thing comes."

While Northumberland, Portland et al hound Traf, Lt Cdr Les Smith is co-ordinating air strikes on the fleet flagship. His last job was fending them off - aboard Illustrious.

"We know what's happening out there so hopefully we can give them the right training and get their brains thinking," the air warfare officer says.

"I want to make Joint Warriors more dynamic, less predictable - because that's what the bad guys do."

Speak to any of the JTEPS staff and they'll stress this point.

"Anyone who's done a JMC and now does Joint Warrior will find they're chalk and cheese," stresses Sqn Ldr Spud Harrild.

"JMC used to run on rails. There's far more 'free play' in these."

Normally based in Northwood, twice a year JTEPS decamp to the top floor of naval base headquarters in Faslane - set aside as Joint Warrior HQ - where they're joined by more than 150 extra staff, many of them reservists, for the duration of the exercise.

In fairness, they could be based anywhere,











because all they see for the two weeks of Joint Warrior is the mess, their beds and the operations centre.

"The big regret is that we're in here and cannot be out there," says Lt Cdr Will Peters. But it's not all bad.

"I had a great week driving around Scotland looking for beaches amphibious forces could use. People would pay good money to go on holiday there, meet the locals," he adds. "It's great to visit the places, draw up a plan then carry it out."

It's a plan carried out at breakneck speed. "The exercise runs at three or four times normal speed," explains Lt Cdr Pomfrett.

"That's demanding. But demanding is rewarding. Everyone gets something out of Joint Warrior."

EVERYONE. The fliers. The deck handlers. The loggies. The ops room team. The chefs, sorry logisticians (catering services (preparation)).

Each watch there are nine chefs on duty in Lusty's galley. With 1,000 mouths to feed three times a day, it's not been as busy as this on board perhaps since 2001-02 during Exercise Saif Sareea and initial operations in Afghanistan.

"We turn up and do our best, working as a team, it makes the hours fly by," says LCH (he really doesn't like being called LLOGS) 'Pob' Morrey.

The galley team works slightly different shifts from the rest of the ship's company - "otherwise we'd be changing watches at meal times and it would be chaotic, like going down Oxford Street trying to find presents on Christmas Eve," Pob points out.

It's the night shift (10pm-6am) which is the busiest as bread is baked, vegetables and meat prepared for the following day's dinner, stores brought up from the bowels of the carrier.

And right in the middle of all this prep, there's breakfast: something like 850 mouths to feed at 4am (there's another breakfast at 7 for the 'day workers'...).

Eat. Sleep. Shower. Work. It sums up the routine aboard the flagship quite nicely.

"FOST is much more intense, but this is more realistic," says PO Lloyd Priest, in Lusty's ops room - you could call it Dragonia's den, but we

never would. "You have to be on the ball, respond to things quickly. You do get quite 'into it', like a real particularly situation,

when it's busy." Harriet AB(CIS) Jones, in Illustrious' communications centre, adds: "At action stations, it's mayhem, people running around, keeping

constant communications with the ships - and takes this exercise. because we're in a task group, there's a lot of comms."

But Joint Warrior is, she smiles, "better than FOST. Not as much cleaning to do."

It's also a much larger 'playground' than the waters used by FOST off Plymouth.

"Joint Warrior gives you something that the South West areas don't - you can take advantage and weave in and out of the island chains," says Lt Cdr Michael Wood, Illustrious' navigator.

"For me, this is chance to navigate a task group, to co-ordinate refuelling, co-ordinate individual ships, or those moving in a group.

"To lead them through these waters, as a group, at high speed is very rewarding."

It's rewarding too for his commanding officer. "This is the first time in quite some time that a

carrier has been put through its paces like this, fusing skills at the high end of carrier operations," says Capt Ben Key, Lusty's CO.

His ship goes into refit in Rosyth in the new year, an overhaul which will take her out of the fold for around 18 months.

So that means she'll be winding down then.

"By December we'll have been away on and off for eight months this year - we're putting the hours in," says CO Capt Ben Key, adding wistfully, "sadly, nowhere exotic."

> **NOWHERE** exotic? But she's steaming around off Caledonia.

Walk anywhere on 2 or 5 Deck on Illustrious and you're reminded of how seriously the ship

- PO Lloyd Priest

"FOST is much more intense,

but this is more realistic."

The ship does its utmost to 'get into character' with the Dragonian flag plastered everywhere (apart from the main mast, of course).

There's a TV channel featuring Dragonian News ('All Dragonia, all fact') presented by George Pickletickle, aided by 'weather girl' Just Steve - "Wrap up warm on the upper decks..." - and 'Parky'-style interviewer Michael Michael Michaelson (yep, they're all YOs...).

There's the Dragonian national anthem (which bears an uncanny resemblance to the *Blackadder* theme).

And there's the Dragonian Herald, produced daily with the latest news and sport from the task force – although fact takes second place to 'Dear Diane', a rather warped agony aunt column.

Warped? "I am a 44-year-old who has recently

found myself with some strange and disturbing urges. Is it wrong that I am in love with ducks in the local pond?"

Yes, it probably is...

Even the task group commander, Cdre Simon Ancona, gets into the Dragonian spirit. According to his 'biography', the commodore scraped a living selling veg to soldiers, later became a bareknuckle fighter, turned down offers to join NASA, made more than £1m wheeling and dealing on the stock market, and helped find cures for cancer and AIDs... which was nice.

And when not saving the world, he conducts the Berlin Philharmonic, displays his paintings at the Royal Academy and nurtures his leech farm.

Putting his RN hat back on - his more official title is Commander UK Carrier Strike Group - the commodore underlines the importance of Joint Warrior.

"We do what we can on simulations, but there is no substitute for getting out there and 'doing it'." he stresses.

"It is a fantastic exercise, using the hardware for real, testing our people, that motivates everyone from top to bottom.

"It's unpredictable, it's challenging. It's also allencompassing. That's what makes it special."

There have been murmurings in the press about Joint Warrior. Why spend millions on a massive, largely naval, exercise when the crucible of effort by Britain's Armed Forces is in Helmand?

Why? Because you never know when or where the next war will be.

"If you want to stand on the world stage, you need to do something," says Cdre Ancona emphatically.

"If we don't do exercises like this, we lose the ability to prepare for doing the business for real."



Dad's D-Day

MY FATHER, Leading Signalman Henry Alexander Marsden, died in August aged 86. He was buried in his Navy blazer that he always wore with pride and the Royal Navy provided a Union Jack to drape his coffin, and the Last Post was played at his graveside.

My father loved the Navy and encouraged his three grandsons into the Armed Forces - serving 22 years, 14 years, and one is still serving in the Navy.

My father served in HMS Brocklesby and LCT 455 during the war. When I was going through his things I found a manuscript written in his own hand on June 5 1944 giving his account of the day before D-Day as it happened.

He was a Leading Signalman and took the message giving orders for the day to the captain.

It is unfinished – I suppose he had to leave it due to the importance of the day before D-Day! We can only imagine what it must have been like for all the sailors who showed such courage.

But it makes interesting reading. My brother Alec and sister Vivien, along with myself and family, are extremely proud and we must never forget what our Servicemen sacrificed for our country.

> Cynthia Parkinson, Blackpool

We have published Leading Signalman Marsden's account in a new site called Dittybox, which can be found on the Navy News website, www.navynews.co.uk under Have your Say.

We created this site because we receive many historical accounts and stories which make fascinating reading but are too long to be published in the paper.

We hope readers enjoy it - Ed

Family Ark

MY SON, Daniel Williamson, started his RN career in earnest in September, boarding HMS Ark Royal after finishing his Stage 2 naval training at Collingwood.

I thought it may be of interest that Daniel is the third generation of our family to serve on the Ark.

My father, William Williamson and my older brother, Kevin Williamson, also served aboard. Kevin went on to achieve Lt Cdr before retiring.

Our family tradition remains. Billy Williamson, Widnes, Cheshire

Plinth petition

THE United Kingdom National Defence Association is campaigning to get a permanent memorial/work of art to commemorate our troops who have served and fallen in Iraq and Afghanistan to be placed in Trafalgar Square on the vacant fourth plinth.

To sign the petition, go to http://petitions.number10.gov. uk/TributeToForces

 Martin Cakebread, National Development Director, UKNDA

Light-blue view of Navy Days

AS A Royal Air Force officer living and working up north I could perhaps have been a little put out when my girlfriend, who lives in Plymouth, suggested we attend Navy Days on one of our rare weekends together.

However, coming from a bit of a Navy background myself (father was a bootneck, older brother was Fleet Air Arm before jumping ship to the light blue) I was actually quite keen to see what the Navy had been up to.

Also I thought it prudent that I accompany said girlfriend on her first encounter with Her Majesty's Senior Service in a controlled environment (as opposed to Saturday night on Union Street!).

Living not far from the event, we decided to walk to Devonport and save on parking fees. However, we subsequently struggled to find it!

All joking aside, there were no signs for the base from the direction of the Hoe, and several times cars pulled in asking if we knew where Navy Days was being held.

Plenty of big advertisements for the event, but none of those useful yellow AA signs to be seen anywhere!

We stopped at two unidentified guardrooms before receiving directions and finally making it (after about an hour - bad call on my part)!

What with there being a recession on, I tried my luck on the gate with my military ID where a pretty Wren politely informed me that had I been wearing my uniform I could have got in free.

Of course my uniform was 300 miles away and even if I had brought it with me I doubt I would have had the guts to put it on... £18 was well worth it to go incognito - I don't think I would have been able to take the banter!

However, I was a little surprised that the 'get in free' card didn't work like it used to. Am I being a little naive?

Having purchased a programme for the wife, I made a plan on how to maximise our time on board ships.

The other half was very keen on getting on a submarine and I was pretty excited to see how the new Type 45 had turned out.

The programme said that we were to queue for tickets for HMS Trafalgar at periods throughout the day, so we decided to watch the Royals and the Junglies doing their hostage rescue stuff (all very impressive) and then an awesome Lynx display, before going to join the queue for the boat tour.

However, upon arrival at said queue we were told that unfortunately all the tickets had been given out earlier in the day, due to popular demand.

That, to me, seemed to take away the whole point of having staggered times for getting tickets. The polite RN officer agreed wholeheartedly but said it didn't happen on his watch!

Still, this meant that we had more time for HMS Daring, since it was getting on a bit now and all the ships shut at 1730 (according to the programme and the tannoy).

Sadly, on arrival at said shiny new destroyer, five minutes past the hour, we were informed that she'd been closed at 1700. For cleaning.

Nothing we could say or do would change their mind, so with a heavy heart we left (via a reasonably priced burger). I hope you can A £25 Amazon voucher

pass on the contents of this message, along with my compliments, to

 This year's Navy Days at Plymouth Picture: LA(Phot) Martin Carney

> However, under the large 'Join the RAF today!' message, I was a little perplexed to see a big picture of an RAF Harrier, occupied by none other than a RN lieutenant...

> > Flt Lt R P Davies RAF

Conflict over Warship

WHAT planet is Alan Galinski living on? (Letters, October) It's quite true what he says in some respects but I really do think he's lost the plot.

Times change, people change and the changes are not always for the better, BUT the commitment of our troops in whatever Service are as sound as they always were.

I was in the mob from 1958 to 1969 and yes, things were different, of course they were but one things I have noticed is that

ship cleanliness is still paramount. I also remember the Sailor series and I can remember an acquaintance of mine saying he didn't think it showed certain elements of the RN in a good light and in particular the runs ashore aspect.

It will be regrettable if Mr Galinski's opinions continue to be hereditary and remember, this is a programme prepared for television.

He should encourage his son to give it a try - he may be pleasantly surprised.

- Michael Murphy, ex-LRO(G) RN Communicators' Association, Bulwalk Albion Centaur Association, Devizes, Wiltshire

...IF I was still serving as a naval recruiter, I would be spitting feathers at the appalling stuff shown on the TV series Warship.

The Royal Navy has had to suffer some utter tripe in the past, but this lot beats it all.

Senior officers are shown as desperately wanting to be seen as one of the boys. A ship's commander has been reduced to 'Eks Oh' and junior officers have all the bearing and authority of Winnie the Pooh.

Petty Officers either simper "Hi guys!" like holiday camp attendants, or bellow pointless, foul-mouthed inanities like wannabe parade sergeants.

All seem to wear their hats tilted forward with the peak over their eyes, making them look ridiculously like Gestapo milkmen.

The Royal Marines were generally portrayed as surly and ill-disciplined.

The whole performance was a humourless, charisma-free exercise in shooting oneself in the foot. Someone needs to get a grip.

- Lt E C Coleman, (Ret'd) Bishop Norton, Lincolnshire

Any more for the bar?

I HAVE noticed some recent correspondence in the Navy News regarding officers being awarded the Bar to the Long Service and Good Conduct medal.

I am a serving Senior Upper Yardsman and I too have a bar to my LS&GC.

I am sure that this award is not that rare amongst SUYs, but it would be interesting to hear from others.

> Lt Paul G Youngman, Navy Command HQ

to the letter which amuses, impresses or of you letting us come along). Royal Navy, let down enlightens us the most. somewhat for us by one or two confusing those responsible for organising contrasts between the programme and actual events. the event. To round it all off, on No mean feat I'm sure, given departure we walked past the RAF Good show! today's operational climate. An impressive display from the recruitment stand (pretty decent Time to save HMS Caroline I RECENTLY visited Belfast and saw HMS Caroline in a very run-down state. Her sides were rust-streaked, her armament had been removed and various structures had been built on her decks. I understand that her future at Belfast is

uncertain.



Squadron and is the sole survivor of the Battle of Jutland, whose centenary will be in 2016. Jutland was probably only second in importance to

HMS Caroline was part of the Fourth Light Cruiser

Trafalgar in our naval history and presumably the Royal Navy will wish to celebrate this event. We now have less than seven years to restore the

ship to her Jutland condition for display, ideally either at Portsmouth or Chatham. It would be tragic if this ship should be allowed

to continue her decay, rather than taking her place alongside Warrior, Victory and Cavalier. What can be done in the short period remaining?

- R J McGarel-Groves RM, Boldre, Lymington, Hampshire

opinion

NOVEMBER is the month for remembrance. Or at least, for formal remembrance.

Those who have lost family and friends in the service of their country remember them every day. November has been the month for national remembrance

ceremonies since Armistice Day in 1918 and in less than a decade it will be 100 years since the end of World War 1.

The direct links have already gone, as the last known men in Britain to have served in World War 1, Harry Patch and Henry Allingham, both died earlier this year.

Despite this, the tradition of remembrance seems to grow stronger rather than weaker.

Twenty or 30 years ago, few towns and cities in Britain still

observed the traditional one or two minutes' silence, except at their war memorials. Now it is observed nationwide.

In April Prince William launched an £8 million appeal for the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, where the Armed Forces Memorial was dedicated in 2007.

The vision is not just to provide better facilities at the National Arboretum but to educate future generations in the history of their country and the importance of remembrance.

The Arboretum now attracts more than 300,000 visitors every year, including many young people who recognise that remembrance is important for the future, not just for an understanding of the past.

Editorial Managing editor: Sarah Fletcher (023 9272 4194) (023 9272 5136)

Editor: Mike Gray News editor: Richard Hargreaves (023 9272 4163) Production editor: Helen Craven (023 9272 5067) Fax 023 9283 8845 edit@navynews.co.uk

Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH

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BY TUBB



... I don't mind the force ten gales and the mountainous seas, the cold wind-lashed rain and the long lonely watches of the night, because each turn of the screw is bringing me closer to you



Movina on from the Navy

I TOTALLY disagree with the sentiments voiced by Mike Brown about leaving the Navy (letters, October)

He is complaining to the wrong people. Why doesn't he write direct to the MOD and offer up his suggestions on what should be adequate

renumeration for his discharge on leaving the Navy? The MOD are certainly not going to act on what

is basically a 'drip'! You should face up to the fact that once your final draft to 'Release' is issued you are supernumerary and therefore do not figure in the future of the Royal Navy.

Forget about little niceties on leaving, consider the fact that you are getting a pension and gratuity for your years of service.

That should be uppermost in your mind – and the fact that you are now joining the real world, where no-one in Civvy Street is guaranteed a pension on retirement and people get very little thanks from employers for hard work and dedication during their

working life. You don't know you're born, Mr Brown. You obviously considered your service in the RN as a career. I served for 23 years and considered it only as a job to earn a living and was glad when I was

released. I had similar thoughts along the lines of your

letter, but soon realised that life is too short and

moved on.

So should you, by entering another chapter of your life, and resolving not to look through your RN career in your years to come through rose-coloured glasses.

- Ken Holloway ex-CPOWTR, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

REFERRING to Mike Browns' excellent letter, it transpires that nothing has changed in the 33 years since I left the 'Andrew.'

My abiding memory of that day is of seven of us leaving the Navy - including one CPO, two POs and an LRO - and thinking that probably our service alone totalled over 80 or 90 years' service.

We were ushered into a room where sadly an excuse of a Wren writer who didn't seem to care about the job she was doing or her standard of dress (I know not all Wrens are like this, but it was a sad indictment of Wrens) asked us to throw our ID cards into a cardboard box and then dropped our envelopes into our hands without any due respect – perhaps she just thought us a bunch of civvies?

Is it too much to have asked the Officer of the Day (or some other senior rate) to have handed out the discharge papers with a 'thank-you and good luck' shake of the hand?

It is sad that that is my abiding memory of leaving the Navy after 17 years service.

- Tony Noble, ex-LRO, Rugby

 Picture by courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, with names supplied by Bill Drake. 1) Lt Lin Middleton, Air Weapons Officer 897 NAS - later Captain of Hermes during the Falklands Campaign, and later Rear Admiral, 2) S/Lt 'Jock' Hare, 897 NAS, 3) Lt Tim Samler, 897 NAS, 4) S/Lt Gerry Maynard, 897 NAS, 5) S/Lt NK 899 NAS, 6) Lt Pete Newman, 899 NAS, 7) S/Lt Phil Cardew, 899 NAS, 8) Lt NK, 899 NAS, 9) S/Lt NK, 899 NAS

A page of family history

I READ with great interest the letter from Lana Hughes of Kirkwall in Orkney (May).

When I joined HMS Cleopatra in 1951, my first real ship, our commission took us to Malta, where I met a Maltese girl of similar age. Her mother had been widowed early in the war.

Her father had been a Petty Officer's Steward and was drowned when HMS Royal Oak was torpedoed.

My father had served on the battleship in the 1920s and we had many photographs of her and

necessarily for publication.

always be accompanied

the

correspondent's name and address, not

LETTERS to

HMS Royal Sovereign around our

A few years ago my wife and I were on a coach tour of Scotland. We spent a whole day on Orkney. A delightful place.

The people were helpful and friendly and there appeared a lot to see.

I was interested in anything which referred to HMS Royal Oak. So when we toured the cathedral, any memorial or historical piece about the battleship was closely inspected.

There was a large Memorial

should

by the

editor

Book which contained the names of those who perished in the sinking. The pages were alphabetical and a fresh page was turned each day, or week.

On the day we visited, the book was open at the last page.

It displayed the last name -Petty Officer Officer's Steward M Zahra.

For the book to be open at that page, on that particular day, 50 years later, I think is more than coincidence.

- Tom Redman, ex-CPO PRI (retired 1973) Sheerness, Kent

Naming Eagle's Squadrons MANY thanks for your selection

of news from the Fleet Air Arm's

The supplement (October) was interesting from two aspects, firstly the photograph of S/Ldr Dunning's deck landing.

I have seen this photograph many times before but this is remarkable for its quality, considering the quality of cameras and film at that time.

Secondly, Photographic Memories (page 12) - as the Air Electrical Officer of 897 NAS at that time I am able to correct the detail of

some of those present. HMS Eagle carried two Seahawk

Squadrons and the picture shows pilots of both Squadrons, ie 897 and 899.

This is the first time I have seen this picture, and I am now encouraged to search the Imperial War Museum for more.

> - Bill Drake, Bishops Waltham, Hants

The art of cutaways

NOTING Cdr Loring's comments (October) about the Amethyst cutaway, I can confirm that according to the Admiralty plan the Modified Black Swan class was shown to be fitted with stabilisers.

I have also checked the plans for the Type 12 and as he correctly states, these were apparently not fitted to this class.

Quite why one earlier class should have been and a later one not, is best answered by a contemporary naval architect.

As for bunks, there were no bunks in the messes, you will see that hammocks are shown in their daytime stowage.

I think Cdr Loring is mistaking stowage, which ran around for the ship's sides, for bunks.

Referring to the Ark Royal cutaway, there were a couple of typo errors that the eagle-eyed noticed, and that is all!

The cutaways are thoroughly and painstakingly researched, using Admiralty plans and, if

available, detailed photographs. I also make a thorough nuisance of myself consulting experts,

whom I think may have an answer regarding some minor detail. Usually they don't!

The annotations are taken from their original plans, and their length and brevity dictated by available space on the spread.

I do have plans for a Southampton-class cruiser and maybe one day it will be featured - the Belfast being a Modified Town Class and visually quite different.

Perhaps one day, I hope, I will even illustrate the non-stabilised Type 12.

- Ross Watton - cutaway artist, Ceredigion, West Wales ...I served on board HMS Amethyst in 1950-51, during the

Korean War. To the best of my recollection she was not fitted with stabilisers. The sleeping arrangements were

hammocks, seat lockers and camp beds, there were no bunks during my time.

The Oerlikons on the signal deck sponson were replaced by single Bofors. I also served on her sister ship, Opposum, from 1956-57 she was identical in all respects.

> Peter Warrington, A/B, Lichfield, Staffordshire

...In the mid-fifties I was involved with the design of the three-tier bunks, so much so my head of section wanted to name it after me! He received the MBE and a few hundred pounds reward.

The bunks accommodated three men at night and folded down to a three-seat settee during the day.

The first ships to have this new layout were the Tiger Class cruisers, Tiger, Lion and Blake, which were completed in the early sixties, having been launched during the war.

> - Charlie Nichols (ret'd civil servant) Trowbridge

which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it.



Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in Navy News. We do, however, publish many on

accompanied by images. We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

> The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.

A FORCE FOR GOOD



Dixie's beard leads the way

IN Ark Royal the marine engineers (pictured above by PO Jon Hamlet) have been finding time during a busy trials period to do some charity fund-raising.

Or maybe saving time would be more accurate, as the sailors decided to forgo shaving to engage in a spot of competitive beard-growing.

Inspired by CPOET(ME) 'Dixie" Dixon, who is extremely proud of his 'full set,' the engineers got the CO's permission to dodge the razors for two weeks.

The event was a great success, even though the beard quality was sometimes in doubt. The judging was carried out by the ship's chaplain, the Rev Richard Ellingham, ably assisted by Jane Williams and Emma Prince from the Naval Families Federation.

POMEM Richard Dorgan, from Neath in South Wales, was the overall winner of the 'Best Beard' section and ET(ME) John Scott, aged 18, from Aberdeen, won the 'Worst Beard.'

Both were delighted with their results and were presented with suitably-decorated cakes.

John remarked: "I'm lucky I don't work in the fresh air, any stubble I did manage to grow would have blown away!"

The hirsute (or not) competitors raised £275 for the Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity.



Bikers from 45 Cdo remember Sgt 'Manny' Manuel

Manny's memorial motorbike mission

Thus a team of 25 riders, nearly

all of whom had known Manny, set

out from RM Condor, the home

of 45 Commando, and headed to

On the way, the unit padre,

the Rev Bill Gates, held a small

service of remembrance at the foot

of the Commando Memorial at

The motorcyclists visited other

Scottish service establishments,

including HM Naval Base Clyde

at Faslane, Royal Marines Reserve

Scotland in Govan, and the Army

border to visit the Defence School

of Transport in Leconsfield in

Yorkshire, and the RMR unit in

Newcastle, before heading back

towards Arbroath, a round trip of

who had hatched the original idea

for the tour with Manny when the

two of them were serving in Sangin

together, said: "Sgt Manuel was

a real character who loved his

motorbike, and was known to us

all. It seemed very fitting to raise

money in memory of him, and to

honour all our fallen comrades

enjoyable bike ride around the

country and we would like to

thank everyone who donated

money to our causes, which are

Help for Heroes and the Royal

The bikers raised more than

He added: "It was a really

during conflicts overseas."

Marines Charitable Trust."

£3,000.

Organiser Major Gary Giles,

Then the team went south of the

Personnel Centre in Glasgow.

the west coast of Scotland.

Spean Bridge.

about 850 miles.

ROYAL Marine Sergeant 'Manny' Manuel always planned to do a motorcycle marathon around Scotland in aid of charity.

Sadly it was not to be, as the keen biker was killed in action during a patrol in Helmand province. But Manny's friends and fellow bikers from 45 Commando Group Royal Marines, in Arbroath, decided the tour should go ahead in his memory.

Manchester pedals north

CYCLISTS from Manchester were pedalling northwards as Navy News went to press.

The team of 12 – 11 cyclists and one support driver - were wending their way steadily up the country, collecting for Help for Heroes along the way.

On arrival at their destination, the cyclists were meeting up with some of their fellow shipmates, and visiting two of the Type 42's affiliated charities: Redwood Park School, and St Ann's Hospice.

Before setting off, CPO 'Arthur' Fowler said: "The idea was to present the money raised from our recent seven-month deployment to the ship's charities in Manchester - and by cycling up there to raise more money in the process."

You can pledge your support online at www.justgiving.com/ garethfowler.

From puppy to popy

NOT so much puppy love as poppy love... (Groan - Ed)

Gulf War veteran CPO Allen Parton brought along his new assistance dog Endal Junior to HMS Collingwood for the launch of this year's Poppy Appeal.

Allen first appeared with the Royal British Legion's 'Poppy man' in a poster campaign two years ago to raise awareness of the 900,000 injured Servicemen and women in the UK.

The reunion between Allen and his statuesque partner was marked by a parade at Collingwood's parade ground, where they were joined by local poppy collectors, Sea and Marine cadets, veterans, serving personnel and members of the RBL motorcycle club.

And of course, Endal Junior, the labrador that has taken over from the original Endal, Allen's faithful long-time assistance dog, winner of a PDSA gold medal, and star of many a TV report and documentary, who died earlier this year.

Allen said: "We are all just extremely grateful and indebted to the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust for making today's event the success it was.

"And it really is another superb example of what can be achieved when two of my most favourite Service charities work together."

Allen added: "Last year, the RBL spent more than £80 million on the welfare needs of injured



· Poppy man', Endal Junior and Allen Parton join Poppy Appeal volunteers to promote the RBL fundraising event

servicemen and their dependants, of which £30 million was raised during the two-week Poppy Appeal.

"I am well aware that the appeal each year is only for such a short and precious time, and if we can involve more people in giving their time to become a poppy collector than we can raise even more this vear."

Allen's heartfelt plea called for people to get involved, even if their time is limited to a short contribution, as even a few hours can bring in much-needed cash

for the military appeal. He added: "Today we see graphic images on the television and in the papers of injured troops, some still in their teens.

"It is all too easy to forget that those injured in World War 2 and new conflicts were, at the time, young-faced teenaged Servicemen

"The welfare needs of so many injured Servicemen and of their families are not diminishing with time."

If you think that you can give some time this year to be a poppy collector or arrange to have a collection box at your place of work, then contact the RBL on 0800 085 5924 or visit http://www. britishlegion.org.uk/support-us/ volunteers/find-out-more

Do you do enough?

WOULD you like to help fellow ratings and former ratings and their families who find themselves in need? If so, the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust would like to hear from you, for it needs more volunteers for its grants committees.

Last year the Trust gave grants and annuities worth £2.57 million, helping nearly 5,000 families in need or distress.

Each case is considered by one of the area grants committees, which meet twice a week to consider the latest requests and how best to offer assistance.

The committee discusses each case, and three signatures are needed on each request, allowing for a fair assessment. When an application is received and approved, a

cheque can be sent out within three days – a uniquely speedy response.

The Portsmouth Area Grants Committee comprises volunteers who spend Monday and Thursday lunchtimes every week at Castaway House, home of the RNBT, studying cases and deciding what action to take.

CPO Sue Mark, who works at Superintendent Fleet Maintenance in Portsmouth, joined the Portsmouth area committee a year ago.

She said: "It's a very rewarding thing to do because you are helping the naval family and giving something back.

"It gives you tremendous satisfaction if you can actually prevent someone from being evicted, or provide a retired person with a limited income with a new washing machine - I have seen instances of both of these since I've been on the committee."

She added: "The unique thing about being on the grants committee is that it is made up of both serving and retired people helping those that have fallen on difficult times and have a common bond, that of the Royal Navy."

Serving volunteers need permission to take part, and it is only suitable for shore-based personnel. Anyone interested should contact the RNBT on 02392 660296 or the Grants Committee Chairman - Cpl Phil Barnes 023 9254 7206 who is based on Whale Island.

The Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey, told the annual presentation of the RNBT in October that he wanted far more sailors to sign up for SABS – the Sports, Amenities and Benevolence Scheme for voluntary pay-roll giving.

Take-up of similar schemes in the Army and RAF was up to 80 per cent, but the RN was lagging behind, at about seven-and-a-half per cent.

"A quid a week is all we ask - if everyone gave that, we would be raising £1.8 million a year. The more we raise through SABS, the more we can give out in benevolence," said the Second Sea Lord.

Lusty's cyclists pedal on FOUR intrepid cyclists from HMS Illustrious pedalled from John O'Groats to Land's End at

a rate of 100 miles a day, in aid of their favourite charities.

Lts Penny Armand-Smith and Mike Proudman, CPO John Potts and Leading Chef Will Landon cycled the 905mile route in nine days, facing torrential rain across Scotland, the perils of the Edinburgh by-pass, and finally the rolling hills of Dartmoor.

The route was tailored around overnight accommodation and took in the picturesque scenery of the Scottish Borders, the Lake District and the Welsh Border along the way.

The four arrived to an enthusiastic welcome from their support team, CPO Mark Lanfear and Band C/Sqt Ross Hunt, who had kept them fed and watered at regular intervals with the help of their trusty support van.

Penny said: "It was hard work at times, especially across Dartmoor where the hills seemed never-ending, but when we made it to Land's End, it was worth it."

The team raised more than £1,500 for the NSPCC, MIND, and Breakthough Cancer Research.

BANDIE Hunt and his colleagues in Lusty have also been hard at work raising money for Musequality, a charity which helps children discover their potential and develop their leadership skills.

The onboard events, which included a marathon as well as busking and other musical activities, were organised by C/Sgt Hunt, who was present when a cheque for £1,300 was handed to the charity.

The National Association for Colitis and Crohn's Disease received a cheque for £1,000, raised from various charity events organised by the ship's company, and presented to Suzi Clark, the charity's director, by Cdr Chris Groves, Illustrious' XO.

Lt Cdr Paul Burton, who sponsored the charity and whose own child is affected by colitis, said: "I know firsthand that this is a fantastic charity that does a lot of great work and I am delighted that we have been able to donate this money to this worthwhile cause.

■ ILLUSTRIOUS, like her sister carriers, has been immortalised in many paintings and photographs, but now she has a unique embroidery of her ship's crest on display. The hand-stitched picture was worked by Pamela Roberts, an enthusiastic needlewoman who has created embroideries of many crests, flags and logos, including Lord Nelson's flag signal and the crest of HMY Britannia.

Capt Ben Key, who received the tapestry, said: "It is a delight to receive this unique gift and we are very grateful to Miss Roberts for her time and skill; the embroidery will hang with pride onboard HMS Illustrious."

Shawbury brew-haha

STAFF at RAF Shawbury have enjoyed a cup of tea and cakes as part of SSAFA's annual Big Brew.

The event was held in the coffee shop at the airbase and attracted a huge gathering from around the station, no doubt drawn by the cake sale.

Three large cakes were raffled and the result was £312 for SSAFA Forces Help, a record for Shawbury.

Forward quick march

RESERVISTS and staff from RNR unit HMS Forward in Birmingham joined forces to tackle the Wolverhampton half-

Each person taking part carried on their backs a 15kg daysack during the 3 hour 22 minute slog through the city's streets.

The team (pictured right) - CPO Gaz Kaunhoven, CPO Dean Hallett, CPO Jimmy Green, PO Stan Matthews, Logs Sophie Yarworth, LS Ian Hammond RNR, AB Paul Sambrooks RNR, Flt Lt David Cowdray RAF, Sgt Kevin Charley RLC, Shelley Darroch, Beth Welch-Aris, Stuart Beech and Clive Parker - stuck to their order throughout the walk (despite some rumours of the Army leopard-crawling and the RAF getting a taxi...).

To date, the team have raised £1,574.60 in sponsorship for Help for Heroes, chosen due to the unit's close ties to the Royal College of Defence Medicine at Selly Oak.



(a new)

ARE you disabled, or know

a dog to improve their life?

someone who is who might like

Canine Partners is a charity

that trains dogs to help people

with disabilities. It has already





• The team from HMS Collingwood who took part in the MS Therapies Charity Challenge

Bases team up for MS challenge

THE MS Therapies Charity Challenge is a fund-raising event with a difference, because as well as raising money for multiple sclerosis sufferers, it gives them the chance to take part in the activities.

This year teams from all over the UK, including HMS Collingwood and HMS Sultan, gathered in the Snowdonia National Park to carry out an orienteering type challenge, complete with intrepid volunteers in their wheelchairs.

The teams were tasked with carrying the wheelchairs lashed to metal frames over the mountainous 10km course, including bogs, forests and

The idea is that the volunteers with MS get an opportunity to experience activities beyond their normal capacities and enjoy the stunning scenery along the way.

HMS Sultan fielded two teams, who set off for the seven-hour coach trip to Snowdonia and the next day spent three hours trudging up hills, wading through pools and negotiating fallen trees.

After a quick photo-call at the finish line, the teams (minus their MS sufferer) took a refreshing bath in the nearby river and compared their

The mission was to raise as much money as possible for the Solent MS Therapy Centre in North End, Portsmouth. The target was £2,000 and the team is on well on its way, but more donations are welcome. If you would like to donate, please contact Lt Paul Bastiaens at HMS Sultan on 02392 542765.

HMS Collingwood's team, led by Leading Physical Trainer Ian Phillips, took along four brave women who had volunteered to be passengers. Although the team failed to beat any records, the organisers agreed that it had kept within the spirit of the competition by tackling each obstacle with a desire to go through it rather than find a way round it - a solution that made for an interesting experience for the wheelchair passengers.

The Collingwood team hopes to have made more than £1,500 by the time all the promised monies come in.



 And HMS Sultan's challengers with their intrepid – and suitably waterproofed - wheelchair-bound volunteer (we think she must have known exactly what to expect...)

Looking for help at Lourdes

HELPERS are needed to take part in the International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes next year, particularly those who have already been there and want to give something back.

The 2010 pilgrimage runs from May 21-28 and volunteers are needed to become helpers or companions to former servicemen and women who are making the trip to France.

The organisers are keen to point out that it's not a holiday for the helpers, who may find themselves looking after their VIP charges 24 hours a day, helping them to get dressed, carrying luggage, cutting up food, washing, and of course pushing wheelchairs for those who cannot walk.

Commanding Officers are generally helpful as the visit is classed as Command Leadership and Management Training, so the week should not come off annual leave.

For further details visit the website at www.jshhg507hq.com

Sultans of A dog is for the world

SOME of the worst weather in ten years on the Keswick to Barrow Charity Challenge failed to daunt the spirits of a team from HMS Sultan, which not only won a clean sweep of trophies, but is now World Champion K2B Team for 2009.

The Delayed Neutrons team (perhaps not the most appropriate title in view of their speed) and Fast Neutrons Teams joined more than 2,000 walkers at the start line at Rough How Bridge for the 43rd Keswick to Barrow Walk.

Sultan's teams were dropped off at 0545 but because of the queue to start, didn't get away until 0610, walking straight into the first of many downpours.

The first support point, seven miles in, at Dunmail Raise, the highest point of the route, gave a small respite before the walkers made their way down into Grasmere for the first checkpoint.

By now 28 walkers had retired because of the continuing bad weather, but the Sultan teams ploughed on and were pleased to reach Coniston Water where their support cyclist arrived with welcome first-aid and chocolate.

By now 176 walkers had given up but the teams climbed the four miles onto Kirkby Moors and were treated to beautiful views of Morecambe Bay and the Irish Sea as they descended.



Keswick to Barrow participants with Vice Admiral Richard Ibbotson and Cdre Al Rymer

The final stretch took the walkers through the villages of Marton and Dalton, where many well-wishers stood by and applauded the efforts of the damp weary walkers as they trudged up the final miles to the finish at Hawcoat.

More than 1,900 people completed the 40-mile distance which included over 1,100m of ascent, despite some of the worst weather in K2B history.

HMS Sultan Team Delayed Neutrons won the L Redshaw Cup for the best overall team performance with all 12 men back in eight hours 22 minutes.

Delayed Neutrons also took the K2B Challenge Cup for the best non-Cumbrian team and the W Richardson Trophy for the best MOD team, giving them a clean sweep of team trophies and the treble for the Hampshire-based

It also means they are the World Champion K2B Team for 2009.

The teams now face their biggest challenge of the race collecting the sponsorship money. This year they are collecting for the Gosport and Fareham Inshore Rescue organisation, and KIDS

- Fareham and Gosport Young Carers' Association.

provided dogs to a number of injured Armed Forces people. The charity trains dogs for two years to help people with mobility problems, including lifting, stretching, and fetching. The highly-trained dogs can respond to an array of commands, including turning on lights, opening doors, pressing the button on lifts and Pelican crossings, collecting items in the shops and carrying them to the check-out. Canine Partners is actively seeking Servicemen and women who might need their dogs. The waiting list is only six to 12 months, followed by the relevant application process -



to find out more, email: info@

caninepartners.co.uk

And Sultans of summer

THIS year's HMS Sultan Summer Show was a huge success, breaking the fundraising record of its 30year existence to net £,56,000 for charity.

Beneficiaries ranged from Naval charities to local good causes who were presented with donations from £15,000 for the Naval charities through to smaller sums of £2,000 to £4,000 for the smaller.

A ceremony at the Gosport base brought together representatives from: the War Memorial Hospital, Ark Stubbington, Sultan VCC, Harbour Cancer Support, 9th Gosport Scout Group, Queen Alexandra Hospital, Friends of Gosport and Fareham Homeless, Gosport and Fareham Inshore Rescue, RNBT and the Down's Syndrome Education Trust.

Commanding Officer Cdre Al Rymer said: "Sultan's Summer Show is all about promoting the Royal Navy in the local community and raising funds to support good works - and it was fantastic to see so many visit us that weekend."

As Navy News went to press Sultan's annual bonfire night took place on Thursday October 29 - the profits of which go to the Central Amenities Fund in support of Sultan personnel.

 Cdre Al Rymer deals out the funds from HMS Sultan's Summer Show

Pictures: LA(Phot) Darby Allen





 Standing left to right, LS(CISSM) Keith Harding; CPOET(WESM) Darby Allen; CPO(CISSM) Kenny Walker, LS(CISSM) John Benson; Front row: AB(CISSM) Colin Banks and PO(WSTSM) Davey McCoy

Astute runners

SIX runners from new-build submarine HMS Astute helped to launch the New Balance Half Marathon in their affiliated town of Warrington.

Running for the Claire House Hospice, one of Astute's affiliated charities on The Wirral, the team completed the gruelling and undulating course in very respectable times.

CPO Kenny Walker said: "It was an outstanding effort by all six runners and we hope to have raised about £1,500 for a very worthy cause."

Calendar whirls

THERE are some new perspectives on offer with fundraising calendars for 2010.

Brave women from across the country dared to flaunt a bit of flesh for the British Forces Sweethearts calendar for charity Combat Stress.

The six are all members of the online forum, British Forces Sweethearts, who know and support each other through the website.

Kelly Smith was the driving force behind turning the calendar from an online discussion to a reality. She approached Alan Kelly of the Disabled Photographers Society with the idea of a fundraising burlesquethemed calendar.

The senior service is represented by Michelle Costello, the wife of a submariner - she said: "As soon as I saw the message about the shoot I wanted to be part of it.

"I'm Forces through and through. I didn't mind about the distance, I just knew I was going to do it."

Buy the calendar in A3 (£12) or A4 (£10) from www. britishforcessweethearts.co.uk.

■ THE Rotary Club of Wootton Bassett, in Wiltshire, has produced a 2010 calendar from which half the profits will go to Help for Heroes and the other half to Rotary Club charities.

Retired Squadron Leader and Rotary Club Webmaster Christopher Tidball explained: "We are conscious that Wootton Bassett has become synonymous with military repatriations.

"Those who have seen the town only through the eye of the camera during a repatriation might like to see it in a less sombre mood."

The calendars can be bought through the website at www. woottonbassettcalendar.com

'ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY'

VETERANS of the 8th Destroyer Squadron Association paid tribute to the heroes of Afghanistan by inviting a detachment of 42 Cdo RM to join them for their reunion weekend in Scarborough.

A full programme was organised for the association's 21st anniversary, including social gatherings, a memorial service and a march-past.

BUDE branch has adopted an ex-Stoker as an associate member because of his link with the town through his old ship.

Derek Balman served in World War 2 minesweeper HMS Bude between May 1944 and October 1945, and although the 83-yearold lives in Surrey, he is now regarded as one of the Devon town's own shipmates.

Four other former shipmates of Derek's have been traced, and the branch has been instrumental in attempting to put them in touch with each other.

The branch has also presented its Shipmate of the Year award, which went jointly to Mick Philp and Godfrey Harrison.

VETERANS of the Arctic Convoys retraced the route to Murmansk in order to pay their respects to those who never returned.

Twenty veterans, RN and Merchant Navy, left Harwich on board the passenger ship MV Discovery, bound for Narvik and North Russia.

The 20,000-tonne cruise ship was escorted out of port by patrol boat HMS Tracker.

A memorial service was held off Narvik, where the convoys suffered the greatest loss of life - poppies and wreaths were scattered on to the sea.

MEMBERS of Cheshunt branch joined Welwyn Garden City branch to attend the Battle of Britain Ball at the Royal British Legion.

Apart from "a superb spread [which] was put on by the ladies", there was dancing to the 13-piece Hertfordshire Brass Band, which took many back to the wartime music of Glenn Miller - and some shipmates even managed to find their wartime rigs.

WORKSOP branch has been forced to call it a day after shortage of members meant it was unable to form a committee.

The branch standard was laid up at the Worksop Sea Cadet unit, with the ceremony being conducted by Padre Philip Corbett - the evening being organised by the CO, Lt (SCC) Val Gillert RNR, with help from MID Matthew Mitchell.

The standard was carried and escorted by cadets - for which the last members of the branch were sincerely grateful.

LICHFIELD branch has handed over a cheque for £1,000 to Tamworth Sea Cadet unit, to be used to fund course attendance for cadets who could not normally afford to go.

THE HMS Barham Association will be holding their Remembrance Service at Westminster Abbey on November 28.

The service begins with the parading of the association standard, and includes the laving of wreaths



• Dignitaries, representatives, a dog-walking family and dogs - Derby is the black labrador on the left - on the pitch at Pride Park

Deeps hand over Derby the puppy

POOR Derby - the puppy or going.

In a matter of minutes the young black labrador passed through three sets of hands to his new family - and even then it will only be a temporary stay.

It's not as if he wasn't centre of attention - he was watched by more than 26,000 people, after all.

It's just that so many people had worked so hard to make it all happen that there were certain protocols to be observed.

didn't know if he was coming (Derbyshire) set the ball rolling Derby - and a number of his crew Also involved throughout fundappropriately enough, as they were the driving force behind the initiative, raised most of the money, and chose Derby County's Pride Park stadium as the location for the ceremony.

> So Association president Admiral Sir James Perowne handed the little dog over to the Mayor of Derby, Cllr Sean Marshall, who handed it on - on behalf of the city - to Cdr Peter Green.

Cdr Green is the CO of HMS

The Submariners Association Ambush – which is affiliated to helped the Submariners Association raise some of the £5,000 required to obtain the guide dog.

Cdr Green then passed Derby on to the Steans family, who will look after the puppy during his two years of training, at which point he can be given to his ultimate owner.

The handovers were made before the Championship match between County and Plymouth Argyle; the home team won 2-1, which set the seal on the whole day.

raising and the ceremony itself were members of RNR unit HMS Sherwood and Ambush's affiliated Sea Cadet unit TS Kenva.

During the ceremony Derby was also presented with his submariner's Dolphins, which it is hoped he will wear on his harness throughout his working life as a reminder of his background.

Association Submariners (Derbyshire) branch secretary S/M Terry Hall said the representatives of all the organisations involved in the handover had done themselves proud.

"A sincere thanks to all submariners who donated, no matter how small; it was a day when the RN Submarine Service took pride of place on the football pitch at half time," he said.

"To pinch a Northern expression, it was 'A Grand Day Out' and one I feel our branch can be proud of and one we were definitely proud to share with all our guests."

Service is held on ferry

A MEMORIAL service was held on board a Brittany Ferries vessel travelling from Portsmouth to Caen to commemorate HMS Quorn, which was lost in action off the D-Day landing area in August 1944.

The Quorn was a sister ship to HMS Southdown, the ship in which event organiser Neville Hallifax served during the landings.

The service was broadcast over the ferry's public address system to inform passengers as to what was happening.

Neville and his group then went on to Colleville Montgomery, near Sword Beach, and a visit was made to a small cemetery with memorials for British, Canadian and German soldiers, as well as a sailor from HMS Quebec.

A further visit was made to Arromanches beach, where the remaining Mulberry Harbour can still be seen offshore.

The parades were well-attended and the French foreign minister presented commemorative medals.

Sea Cadets from Ryde and Eastbourne units also attended.

Appreciation and largesse

KING'S Lynn branch has granted Life Membership to padre and welfare officer S/M Rev John Freston in recognition of his many years of loyal service.

The branch has also totted up the amount raised for charity by fundraising officer S/M Jim Clews, his wife Val and daughter Tania and the final total tops £2,000.

It was distributed as follows: £1,400 to King's Lynn Sea Cadet unit, £200 to Pembroke House, £50 to the RNBT, and £100 each to the RMBT, the Gurkha Welfare Fund, Mike Smith's Maritime Museum and the FAA Museum.

Attempts to bring in fresh blood - S/M Clews' newlyarrived granddaughter Phoebe - as an associate member were deemed a little premature, so branch shipmates had to settle for a photograph taken with her instead.

Plenty on parade

A DECISION to open the RNA's biennial Whitehall parade to brother and sister organisations was vindicated with a good turnout at this year's event.

Joining the Association on the day were members of the Association of Wrens, the Royal Marines Association, the HMS Ganges Association, the HMS St Vincent Association, Federation of Naval Associations, the HMS Belfast Association, the Submariners Association and the International Maritime Confederation.

The newly-formed Collingwood Royal Marines Band led the parade, which consisted of some 400 marchers and 66 standards, including the RNA national standard.

The salute was taken by Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey, while National President Vice Admiral John McAnally also attended.

Chaplain of the Fleet the Venerable John Green conducted the service at the Cenotaph, where wreaths were laid on behalf of a number of organisations, areas and branches.

Admiral Massey congratulated the marchers on their turnout, and spoke highly of the co-operation achieved between so many different organisations



 Peter Bloxham lays a floral tribute to his late father at the Fleet Air Arm Memorial at Lee-on-the-Solent. Tom Bloxham was a Telegraphist Air Gunner in Swordfish and Walrus aircraft during the war, notching up 30 years in the RN. The scene was captured on camera by Cdr Sue Eagles, one of the officers involved in the Fly Navy 100 celebrations this year and who was formerly a Navy photographer, and the whole thing was snapped by former Navy photographer Dave Morris



Poem marks frozen time

A NEW dimension was added to a memorial service commemorating the loss of 130 ratings during a bombing raid in World War 1.

The additional element was in the form of a poem entitled The Clock Just Froze, which described the events of the night of September 3 1917 when the Drill Hall at HMS Pembroke, the Royal Naval Barracks in Chatham, were attacked.

The hall is now the Drill Hall Library at the Medway campus of the Universities of Greenwich and Kent, which organised the service in partnership with Chatham branch.

Library staff member Neil Saunders wrote and read the poem, which takes its title from the fact that the large clock in one of the two towers of the Drill Hall was stopped by the blast from the first bomb.

S/M John Wigley, Chatham branch chairman, laid a wreath at the memorial stone on behalf of the RNA and Prof Tom Barnes did the same for the universities, while Prof Alan Reed, of the University of Greenwich, gave the reading.

Additionally, for the first time, resident shipmates of the RNBT's Pembroke House care home at Gillingham also attended the event.

Naval Quirks

UNIQUE AMONG FIRST WORLD WAR CRUISERS, THE RUSSIAN "ASKOLD" HAD NO FEWER THAN FIVE FUNNELS ..



AT THE DARDANELLES, THE RN NICKNAMED HER THE PACKET OF WOODBINES"!



Everytime 1 try to give up ciggies, the "Askold" turns up...

NEVERTHELESS, SHE HAD AN EXCELLENT WAR RECORD ..



"KEEP THE HOME FIRES BURNING"?



OH YES .. IT'S

DEFINITELY GETTING

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Kenyan team is reunited

VETERANS of the RN Training Team Kenya and their friends gathered at the Church House Inn, Rattery, to revive old memories of service in Africa while training up the fledgling Kenyan Navy during the 1960s and 70s.

Toasts were made to Absent Friends, and in particular to their old CO, Tim Hall, who died in December after a long illness.

A warm welcome awaited new guests, including Arthur Coxon, ex-CO Patrol Craft, who was accompanied by his wife Nora.

Arthur gave an interesting account of the Kenyan Navy's three Vosper Thornycroft patrol craft Simba, Shui and Ndovu leaving Portsmouth Harbour to start the long voyage to Mombasa in 1965.

They were among the first vessels to transit the newlyreopened Suez Canal.

A bouquet was presented to Guest of Honour Hilary Hall, who entertained everyone with some kind words, after which the diners settled down to a wellreceived meal which was polished off in true Royal Navy fashion.

The team was once again grateful to Ray, the landlord of the Devon inn, and his staff for a first-class venue – and plans are already well in hand to repeat the success of the event next year.



The Arctic Convoy memorial service takes place on Hoy, Orkney

Orkney Arctic Convoy memorial is unveiled

A GOOD attendance by members of Orkney branch, the Royal British Legion Kirkwall and Stromness branch and members of the public helped make the unveiling of an Arctic Convoy memorial a special occasion.

Held on the island of Hoy, overlooking Scapa Flow, the service was opened with introductions by Dr Tony Trickett, Lord Lieutenant of Orkney, who was followed by Vasily Sondykov, Chairman of the *Duma* (representative assembly) of the KhantyMansiysk Autonomous Okrug (District), who spoke through an interpreter.

RN chaplain Rev David Dawson and Fr Nikolay Savchenko, Russian Orthodox minister, made a call to remembrance.

After the memorial had been unveiled, wreaths were laid by the RN, RNA, RBL, Russian and Orkney councils and visiting navies.

There was also a service for the handing over of Liverpool Association of Wrens standard to Lyness Naval Museum.

Ceremony honours casualty of raid

A SERVICE, thought to be unique, has been held at the graveside of a casualty of the raid on Dieppe in August 1942.

The service, supported by members of the Netley and District branch, is believed to be special as it is, as far as they know, the only one to take place on the exact day of the raid, August 19.

It was the brainchild of John Curtis, who started it around 25 years ago whilst serving as CPO of the Sea Cadets at HMS Wessex, the RNVR base in Southampton Docks.

The service is held at the graveside of LS Stanley Sparks, who died of injuries sustained during the raid, and Stanley's daughter, who lived for only a few weeks.

Stan Sparks' family kept a small tobacconist's shop at Woolston in Southampton for many years.

Originally only a handful of people attended the service, but in 1994 Southampton Town Cryer Jack Hibberd, who was a member of the Netley branch, drew the attention of S/M Brian Sandom to the event.

Brian, who is the current branch chairman, and his shipmates agreed to renovate the stone on the grave, which had become rather scruffy.

The event has attracted more people year by year, including Stan's nieces, who were tracked down by John.

And Netley branch has taken part in the ceremony every year since 1994, bringing along the branch standard.

Unsung hero mourned

BEXHILL-on-Sea branch is mourning the loss of branch president S/M Phil Humphries

at the age of 87. Phil, a founder member of the branch, dedicated much time and effort to ensure the branch remained on an even keel.

His quiet demeanour, and natural ability to make people feel welcome and at ease, was far removed from the wartime exploits which marked Phil out as a genuine unsung hero.

On joining the Navy in 1940 he was singled out for officer training, and while awaiting his turn Phil

they were introduced to 76 ratings, who Phil described as "the roughest, toughest bunch of guys I had ever set eyes on." Phil's job was to help knock them into shape as the first organised RN Commandos. The training was tough. They

was drafted to HMS Sunflower,

On completion of officer

training at Lancing College he

and a colleague applied for Special

Services, not knowing what it

involved but feeling sure it must be

It was certainly different;

the pair were drafted to HMS

Armadillo, on a remote shore of

Loch Long in Scotland, where

better than life with the convoys.

serving with Atlantic convoys.

had to adapt their equipment to enable them to remain underwater for 20 minutes, using the facepieces of their Service gas masks and a piece of hose, one end of which was buoyed up by a piece of cork.

The group's first operational deployment was Dieppe, where they had to clear a safe path to the beach.

As they cleared mines and obstructions they buoyed the channel using inflated condoms attached to weighted fishing line.

"Their biggest fear was being captured by the Germans with large amounts of condoms in their pockets and being accused of being sex maniacs," said Bexhill chairman S/M Eric Woodhouse.

Phil also used to recount the rather awkward predicament of one of his men.

"Whilst clearing the beach in the dark one of the seamen sat down to readjust his gaiters," said Eric.

"The next thing he did was send out a prearranged warning signal.

"On investigation they realised that he had set on a German teller mine; as these were double-action, it would be triggered once the pressure had been released.

"They had to defuse the mine whilst the seamen remained seated on it, therefore ensuring his wedding tackle remained intact."

S/M Phil's team also saw action at the Operation Torch landings in North Africa, and at Sicily, but Phil's craft was hit by a mortar at the Salerno landings, causing Phil to be hospitalised for six months after being temporarily blinded.

Phil went on to serve as Communications Officer in HMS Glenroy at the D-Day landings, after which he became Navigating Officer of Tank Landing Ship LST 373, taking her to the Far East. After the Japanese surrender

he was made CO of LST 413 -

where he was congratulated by Louis Mountbatten, then CinC Far East, for being the youngest officer he had ever met in charge of a major war vessel - Phil was still only 23. Although demobbed in 1946, he was recalled for the Korean War in 1951, and worked as

Navigating Officer in HMS Tiree

on secret trials of submarine

tracking systems around the UK

coast – a job which required very precise navigating skills. Phil's shipmates thanked the Conquest and St Michael's Hospice for the care and attention given to Phil in his final days.



£50 PRIZE (and Swordfish beer) PUZZLE



Wadworth Swordfish, a blend of the brewery's renowned 6X real ale and Pusser's Rum, is a special beer with a Naval twist to celebrate the centenary of Naval aviation.

The brewery, based in Devizes, named the five per cent bottled ABV beer after the Navy's legendary wartime torpedo-bomber as a tribute to the men and women of the Fleet Air Arm.

Remember - enjoy Wadworth Swordfish responsibly.



THE mystery ship in our September edition (right) was HMS Murray, and the other two ships built at Alex Stephen and Co were HMS Palliser and Indian ship Kirpan. G Palmer, of the Isle of Man,

answered correctly, and wins our £50 prize. This month, in addition to

our normal £50 prize, a second winner will be selected to receive a case of Swordfish beer. To enter this draw you must be

aged 18 or over - please indicate

this on the form below. Those who do not confirm they are aged 18 or over will only be entered for the £50 prize; all

others are eligible for both prizes. This month's submarine (above) was reported to carry an extra piece of kit - a crystal ball, provided by Old Moore's Almanack to honour the link or their families.



which was set up because of the boat's name.

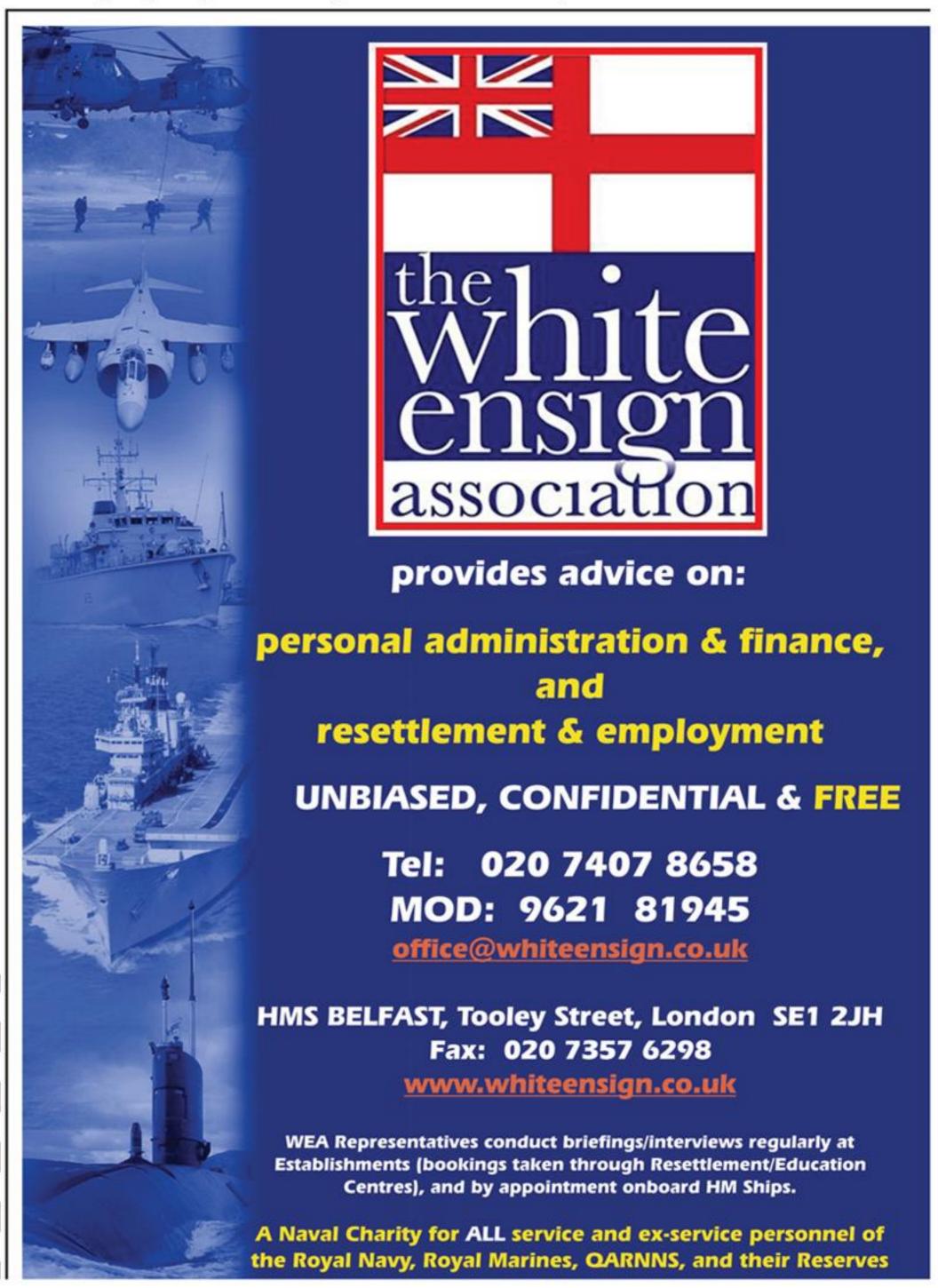
So what was her name? We have removed her pennant number from the picture.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving the correct answer will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

Closing date for entries is December 4. More than one entry can be submitted, but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winners will be announced in our January edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees

•	MYSTERY PICTURE 177	
I	Name	
I	Address	
ı		
ı		
ı	My answer	
L	I confirm that I am over 18 years old	200



News and information for serving personnel

Take charge of your JPA destiny

SIX.tv

IF YOU want to make sure your career manager knows where you want to be going, then you need to keep your employee preferences up to date on JPA.

Select 'Employee Preferences' from the JPA Self Service Employee role, then select 'Add' if you have not already set any preferences, or 'Update' to amend the current details.

A useful reminder is to read the tips at the bottom of the screen before updating your employee preferences.

At each preference field you can use the torch symbol to search for 'County' or 'Areas'.

At the 'Search By' area, select 'description' in the drop down menu, then type in 'County' or 'Area' as appropriate in the value text field. Select 'Go'.

This will produce a list of data, 'Quick Select' the required data line (Click on 'Next 10' to see more options).

Use the drop down menus to select options in other fields.

Use the free text fields at 'Comments' and 'Career Aspirations' to provide additional data.

To aid your career manager, use one of the comments lines to indicate when the preferences were updated (for example, 'Last updated March 2 2009').

Once complete, click 'Apply' then 'Next' to bring up the review screen, changes will appear with a blue dot beside them, if correct, click 'Submit'.

AND if you're feeling a little out on your own when it comes to getting on to JPA, the Navy has a number of licences that will allow people to access their JPA accounts over the internet.

These licences are not intended for people working in MOD units who just want to check out their details from the comfort of their own homes, but 'orphaned' personnel such as those on long-term posting overseas, working with civilian companies or medics in NHS hospitals.

The JPA package on offer does not provide full access to the system, but will allow the individual to carry out JPA Self Service user functions and expenses claims.

If you want to find out more, contact:

- LLogs(Pers) M Etherington personnel administered by HMS Nelson UPO - 023 9272 4298;
- Elaine Wood doctors seconded to INM - 023 9262 8817;
- WO N D Richards RAF personnel assigned to NATO posts in Europe - +49 2161 472 2561;
- Universities Office at BRNC - medical, dental university cadets and UCEs
- Reservists CO of their Reserve Unit
- WO1 S Campbell for all other applications and enquiries - 023 9262 5957 See RNTM 183/09 for full

details.



Pompey Type 23 HMS Richmond arrives home from the Gulf this summer

Picture: LA(Phot) Chris Mumby

Pompey T23s squad system

Flotilla Type Portsmouth Geographical squad pooling trial commenced on January 1 2009, with the objectives of maintaining the manning of the Portsmouth Type 23 units, whilst providing better support to the individual and their aspirations, goals and desires for personal and professional development both at sea and ashore, writes WO1 Vic Parsons, manager of the trial team.

At the beginning of the trial the transfer of the Junior Rate squad element of each of the Portsmouth Type 23 frigates' to the Shore Element was staggered over the first three months of the year.

During this time, in excess of 100 individuals were assigned to the Shore Element, whilst also retaining Junior Rate manning levels onboard individual units

at over 95 per cent. From the outset the management team took the decision to retain individuals' current assignment

dates across all units to maintain stability. This is what allowed the ships to maintain continuity during this initial phase of the trial and also the maintenance of sustainable levels of trained

manpower onboard. It was hoped also that this initial stance would enable us to develop the manpower management plan of 18 to 24 months onboard and three to six months ashore for a period of four years.

However, although we are now issuing assignment orders to reflect this, this drafting cycle is taking longer to implement than was originally envisaged and we continue to work towards this goal.

Our numbers ashore remain between 100 and 120 with personnel constantly cycling through the system. Although, during the last nine months the management team have had to provide reactive responses to unit pinch point areas whilst also meeting an unexpected requirement to regenerate 50 per cent of the trial units for short-notice redeployment in support of the Fleet operational schedule.

This has required careful management so as to reduce the impact of short-notice moves both on the individual and the unit.

To date we have managed to achieve a minimum of three months ashore for all people coming to us from ships and in addition all other manning requests have been filled by those ashore with no impact on the ships.

What is very pleasing to note is that considering the intense levels of operations being undertaken by the sea element, the pool has not breached any of the Second Sea Lord's Personal Functional Standards with regard to drafting personnel to and from ships.

A big part of the trial is to look at the Divisional care of our people whilst ashore and early indications are providing evidence that this 'front of house' element is meeting its objectives.

The majority of the initial divisional issues our people had have been actioned and the Divisional Senior Rates have been able to instigate a settled routine of day-to-day divisional care for our people.

Individual outstanding leave bills are continuously being driven down actively whilst also encouraging and facilitating the personal and professional aspirations of individuals during their time with us.

The ability for our people to be able to plan their life during their time ashore has been a positive gain of the trial so far.

Another key element is that we have been able to engender a sense of belonging for those coming ashore and provide real identity through the reinvigoration of the core service values and naval ethos led by the management team.

We have our own cap tally and the use of weekly musters and the opening of lines of communication has generated a high level of morale and engagement within the pool.

However, one area that has yet to be fully incorporated is the AB and LH electronic reporting process and this will not be fully appreciated until later in the year.

At the beginning of the trial there was some concern about gainful employment of our personnel ashore.

However, the dedicated Divisional Senior Rates have found little difficulty in identifying gainful employment opportunities for our people.

Engineering ratings have been fully integrated into the Superintendent Fleet Maintenance business unit, whilst Warfare Specialists have been found in branch employment within the Maritime Warfare School and Logisticians have been found employment within the waterfront organisation in the Naval Base.

The generated employment opportunities have also been instrumental in encouraging the pool ethos whilst being able to generate varying levels of job satisfaction and variety of employment.

So what have we achieved to date? Financial gains have been made by changes in

assignments taking place predominately within base port or the UK. In addition recent increases in individuals wishing

to remove their notice of service have arisen. Further we have also been able to identify those individuals who have an above average of sea service

and assigned them ashore for some 'down time' and finally individuals are better able to plan their lives when ashore. In conclusion, nine months on and although we

have had to make some small changes to the trial we are definitely improving the way in which we do our The duty of care and Divisional support of those

ashore is proving successful in all aspects thus far and throughout the trial there has been no detrimental effect to the ships.

Anecdotal evidence is suggesting that the trial is positively affecting both the operational units and the individual, in fact, quoting one ship's departmental coordinator: "The T23 pool has done a great job and things are much better now than under squadmanning.

"Long may it continue."

Doing families a FAVA in flying

WE have recently received a number of enquiries concerning the financial schemes available to assist families to visit their Service spouse/civil or long-term partner or relative when they are deployed overseas, should such an opportunity arise, writes Lt Cdr Julie Mayell of DNPS Pay Pensions and Allowances.

We have asked the Navy Command Headquarters Pay and Allowances Policy Team and the Royal Navy Charities Staff for some advice on what assistance is currently available.

The Families Assistance for Visits Abroad (FAVA) Scheme is designed to provide some financial assistance to immediate family (spouse/civil partner and/or dependant child(ren)) of eligible Service personnel whilst visiting a Service person during a period of deployment overseas of over six months in an effort to alleviate some of the stresses of long-term separation.

The FAVA Scheme consists of two elements.

First, it provides a limited payment towards food and costs accommodation the duration of the visit of the immediate family and, where requested by the Service person, it also provides for an Advance of Pay to assist with the cost of the single or return flights.

This Advance of Pay is a shortterm loan which will be recovered from the Service person's salary over a period not exceeding 12 months.

The FAVA Scheme is not open to Service personnel who are in receipt of Get You Home (Overseas) allowance, UK-based Rest and Recuperation or Northern Ireland Journeys, or to those on Loan Service.

For more information about eligibility, Service personnel should speak to their Unit HR Administration Staff.

The Naval Service Assisted Passage Scheme (NSAPS) was introduced to allow unmarried couples and families to take advantage of loans similar to those available to Service personnel eligible for FAVA.

The scheme is funded by the Naval Service Amenities Fund which is itself a subsidiary of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

Only serving personnel who do not qualify for FAVA may apply for loans, but, unlike FAVA, there is no minimum length of deployment for NSAPS or provision of an additional allowance to support living costs throughout the duration of the visit.

Loans are normally only given for the air fare and not to support living costs throughout the visit (although hotel costs may be included if they are part of a properly constituted package holiday). There is no limit to the amount

of the loan that can be requested, nor to the number of people an individual may request a loan for, but they must have a significant link to the Service person.

For example, a loan would not be given for a friend, but would be given for a long-term partner and children, parents, brothers/ sisters etc.

The NSAPS loan is not made to the individual and is administered through the Ship's Central/ Welfare Fund. Repayment is by way of monthly repayments to the Welfare Fund for a period not exceeding 12 months.

For more information about this Scheme, Service personnel should read RNTM 21/09 - The Naval Service Assisted Passage Scheme.

CAB in **Naval bases**

A THREE-year project has been set up at HMS Sultan and HMS Nelson which provides benefit and debt advice by trained caseworkers from Portsmouth Citizens Advice Bureau.

Funded by the Royal British Legion and the RAF Benevolent Fund, the caseworkers are fully trained CAB advisers who can offer debt and benefit advice to any eligible individuals with a service connection.

The caseworkers are primarily office-based, but will undertake home visits and outreach work if needed.

They are all RBL case work trained and are familiar with the programmes and support available for Service people and their dependants.

Each two weeks there are clinics offering debt, benefit and financial advice at the two bases.

The service takes place each fortnight at HMS Nelson in Swiftsure Block and HMS Sultan in Raven Building.

Appointments can be made at the CAB RBL administration line on 023 9285 5868 or for the Outreach service through NPFS via Bridget Main or Jo Woods on 023 9272 2712.

Bye bye to NATO BFPOs

BRITISH Forces Post Office (BFPO) postal provision supporting 11 NATO headquarters in Europe and the US will be reduced over the next year.

This means the closure of BFPOs at SHAPE, Brussels, Brunssum, Ramstein, Stavanger, Karup, Rome, Milan, Lisbon, Valencia and Norfolk, Virginia. The BFPO numbers, which are

useful for administrative purposes such as proving status, banking and internet shopping, will be retained.

A limited postal receipt and despatch facility will be maintained - there will no longer be the option to send parcels back to the UK, but it will still be possible to receive parcels.

Over-the-counter post office services will cease, and for services outside basic mail provision, people will use the relevant international mail system.

Galaxy Briefs Galaxy 12/09: Message from Chief of Staff (Personnel) Naval Command Headquarters. Galaxy 13/09: Naval Manning

Royal Navy Temporary Memoranda

RNTM 182/09: Revised arrangements for appraisal reporting on RN and RM candidates for promotion to commissioned rank.

RNTM 183/09: Access to JPA over the internet RNTM 181/09: Armed Forces

Act 2006 - Naval Service Higher Authorities.

DINS

Balance

DIN 2009DIN01-193: Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Joint Service Conference December 3-4 09 DIN 2009DIN01-194:

Remembrance Day 2009 and the

RBL Poppy Appeal DIN 2009DIN01-201: Naval Personnel Management - Issue

of September 2009 edition of BR3 DIN 2009DIN02-014: Volunteers for Specialist

Debriefing Duties DIN 2009DIN10-037: Exercise Snow Warrior 2010 - Novice skiing Adventurous Training in southern Germany for UK-based

DIBS

37/09: British Forces Post Office (BFPO): Reduction in service at NATO HQs

A thirst for firsts at the

THERE'S been an impressive crop of top class degrees with Naval folk excelling in all areas.

This year's batch of Upper Yardmen has garnered an outstanding collection from the University of Portsmouth - nine out of nine achieving First-class honours for the Mechanical Engineers, and three out of eight for the Electronic Engineers (the other five scored more than respectable Seconds).

Lt Cdr Kath Hutton, the students' Divisional Officer, said: "They've done exceptionally well.

"This year with 17 people we've had the highest course numbers so far. And for this next year, we have 24 just joined Portsmouth University."

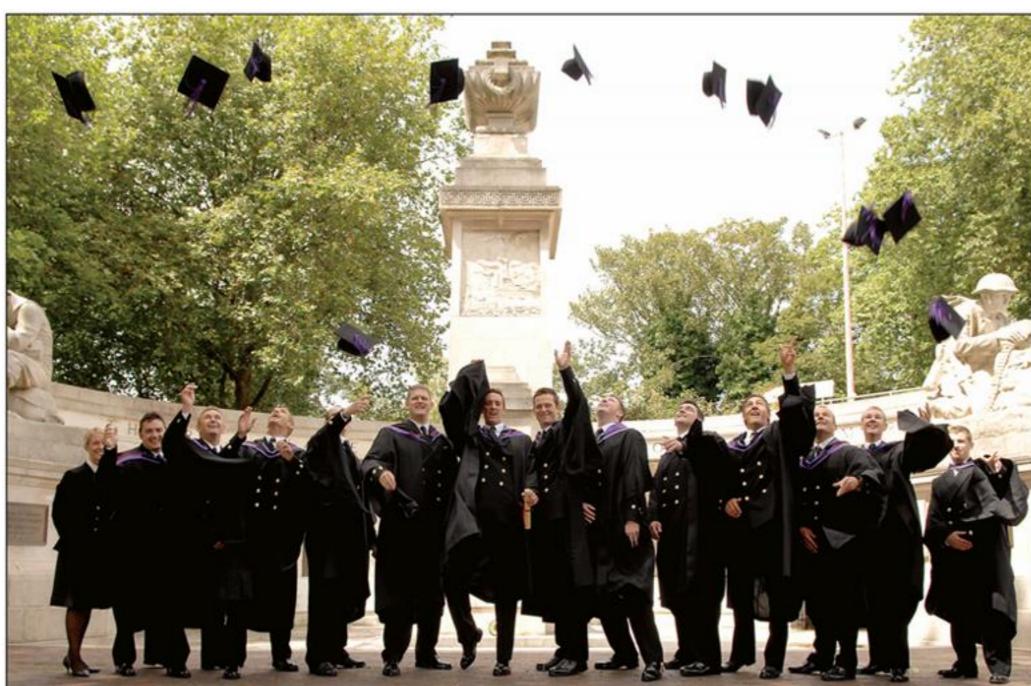
One of the senior rates even walked away with the Institution of Mechanical Engineers Project Prize for a piece of work entitled 'The analytical study of pressure vessels under external hydrostatic pressure' (we have no idea what it means, but it must be good Ed).

Any Engineering Technician (ET) who is interested in the Upper Yardmen route should talk to their Divisional Officer about raising their Commissioned Warrant papers for Upper Yardmen Engineer.

If successful, Upper Yardmen have a 14-month shore draft while full-time at the university – Lt Cdr Hutton said: "They get 14 months to manage their own lives at the university.

"The university like them – they join in the final year but hit the ground running, and normally get good results.

"The university is keen to continue the relationship. It's one aspect of a broad educational and personal development relationship between the university and the



Degree of success: celebrating are POET(WE) Charlotte Thomas, Acting POET(ME) Lee Arnold, POAET Matthew Wakefield, Acting CPOET(WE) Gareth Williams, Acting CPOET(ME) Terry 'Spud' Whittaker, CPOET(MESM) Samuel Gill, POAET Keith Adams, CPOET(WESM) Tim Bateson, Acting CPOET(WESM) Chris Balls, POAET Ryan Gregg, CPOET(WE) James Wagstaffe, CPOET(WE) Richard Gray, POAET Douglas Styles and POET(ME) Nick Cowling

RN – and it's all advertised in DINs."

To find out more about the scheme, see RNTM 143/09: Engineering Branch Upper Yardmen and Senior Upper Yardmen Scheme.

ANOTHER student who has come top of the class at the University of Portsmouth is S/Lt Matt Lane, based at HMS Excellent, who has been awarded a First-class BSc in Maritime Studies.

Matt's degree is the first of

its kind for the Royal Navy. He achieved credits towards his degree through his training at BRNC and subsequent Initial Warfare Officers course.

He then completed his degree through work-based learning, all accredited by the university.

Matt said: "The degree has opened doors for me both in the Navy and academically.

"I was able to get an academic qualification through my normal day job and getting recognition for prior learning.

"The Learning at Work staff supported me every step of the way and are used to dealing with the Royal Navy and the changing pressures this puts on our free

The hope is that Matt's example will encourage other officers to convert their training to a full

If you are interested in finding out more about these degree courses, please contact the university direct at learningatwork@port.ac.uk or visit www.port.ac.uk.

heart of service life

BUSINESS is brisk, and the opportunity to meet and talk to families and serving personnel always brings forward subjects close to the hearts of everyone in the Royal Naval and Marines Royal communities.

The variety of topics under discussion brings some new areas of focus together with updates on key issues:

You may or may not be aware that the Naval Families Federation (NFF) attends a formal evidence session with the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB).

This meeting is our opportunity to register an independent familyfocused view on Naval Service life today and also to respond to questions from the AFPRB on any subject they choose, including pay and allowances.

We look forward to hearing about the recommendations for 2010 and as always we are keen to hear from anyone who has something to say that they think would inform that discussion.

Harriet Harman, Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, Leader of the House of Commons and Minister for Women and Equality invited all three Families Federations to join her on a factfinding tour of RAF Wittering a few weeks ago.

The minister was particularly interested in how Service family members secure jobs and childcare when moving location.

Following the visit the minister made the following comments in a Daily Telegraph interview: "Employers have to realise that if someone has a CV where they change jobs every two years, it's not because of their level of commitment to their work, it's because they have a commitment to their husband."

She added: "We need to raise employers' awareness of this, so they realise it's not that someone in that situation is an unreliable person."

The message is: please keep your experiences and comments coming in as they are actively being sought by the people who may be formulating future plans for us all.

BFPO Closures – We promised to keep concerned families up to date regarding the Planning Round 09 measure to withdraw the BFPO support to NATO HQs informed of any progress made.

Representatives from the three Families Federations were invited to BFPO HQ, together with appropriate representatives from the MOD, which gave us the platform needed for open discussions and an opportunity to highlight the concerns raised by families (see opposite page).

The area of the Deputy Chief of Staff (Personnel) undertook to look at these issues and where possible how they might be mitigated.

A Defence Internal Brief (DIB) was issued on October 6 (2009DIB/37) detailing the outcome.

Additionally the BFPO HQ is working hard to resolve the problem many organisations have (such as commercial companies) with not recognising BFPO numbers.

At the centre of this lies the Royal Mail Postal Address File, and it is within this that BFPO are seeking a solution.

This is, however, outside the



specific control of

BFPO, so no timescale can be put on the outcome. For those families who are

affected by this please be assured that the BFPO team are working hard to bring this to a timely conclusion. The application form for Service

Families Accommodation (1132) has taken on a new look and, from December 1, the applications can be submitted on-line.

The correct form for submission is accessible via Defence Estates' website or via the Housing Information Centre (HIC), and from December 2009, this will be the only application form the HIC can accept.

The new look form features pop-up menus and compulsory field entries - the idea is to reduce the volume of returned applications for completion and to allow senders to attach a delivery receipt as confirmation that the application has arrived at its correct destination.

The new format additionally allows for appropriate attachments and supporting comments to be included.

The regeneration plans for some Service Families Accommodation in Rowner are in the final stages of preparation before the project starts.

The new eco-friendly houses will see some 94 houses replace the 85 set for demolition.

The aim is to give families more energy-efficient, better-looking and modern housing.

The project planned timescale for completion is 18 months; this is however a planned timescale set against the known challenges of the development, so there may be some as yet unknown surprises!

The project team are looking to include design comments from families living in Rowner, they would particularly like any interested individuals to come forward. For further information please contact the NFF.

The Chair of NFF, Kim Richardson, has been invited to become a member of the Independent Scrutiny Group of Armed Forces Compensation Scheme Review.

The exact details of the role and remit are yet to be confirmed, but the NFF are delighted to be able to contribute to this important piece of work on behalf of the three Families Federations.

The Christmas closure dates for Housing Information Centres (HICs) are now posted onto our website.

The Naval Families Federation is contactable via www.nff.org. uk, 023 9265 4374, or: NFF,

Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.

Fledgling officers take to the sea

THE first batch of sailors to receive new-look officer training are being put through their paces on three capital ships.

Forty cadets from Dartmouth have joined HM Ships Ark Royal, Albion and Illustrious for their first sustained taste of life at sea as part of the biggest shake-up of officer training in a decade

The old package of Initial Sea Time and Common Fleet Time – 18 weeks in all – has been merged into a single ten-week spell of what is now known as Initial Fleet Time (IFT).

Officer cadets spend the first half of the training period living and working with ratings before being introduced to wardroom life. Throughout they are expected to get involved

in every aspect of life and activity aboard. But under the new system, trainee officers will experience only life aboard capital ships -Ark , Illustrious, Ocean, Albion and Bulwark -

rather than destroyer/frigate fleet and larger.

The revamped training also means the trainees sit their Fleet Board exams - the make -or-break test which determines whether they will become commissioned officers or not -

upon finishing their time ten weeks at sea, before returning to Dartmouth for four more weeks of training.

Condensing 18 weeks at sea into ten hasn't been universally popular, but among the benefits of the new training system is that pilots and observers will receive a much more comprehensive introduction into life in the Fleet than previously.

Aboard Ark, CPO 'Dutchie' van der Vliet is one of a three-strong team sent by Britannia Royal Naval College to help train the rookie officers.

"I think IFT is fantastic, it provides the cadets with a real sense of achievement and now they receive intensive training when they need it most. Too often training received is forgotten, then re-learned.

"With IFT, each cadet will pass out of Dartmouth significantly more prepared for the next phase of their training."

Cadets aboard Albion and Ark are experiencing their ships going through work-up following fairly lengthy spells of maintenance.

Those in Illustrious have been treated to the

excitement of a Joint Warrior exercise off the Scottish coast.

"We're quite lucky," admits OC Neil Carpenter, a trainee logistics officer. "We're not just going to sea, we are going to sea and experiencing what the Navy does best. We've seen different navies, so many different embarked aircraft."

OC Joshua Albon, who hopes to become a Jungly Sea King pilot, adds: "We are worked really hard. We don't feel we're being let off anything. Irrespective of the branch we go through the same training."

Illustrious is hosting both 'old school' trainee officers and the new cadets. "The other YOs point to their thicker task books and the pilots say they really don't fancy the extra work," said OC Carpenter.

When the cadets finish their IFT in late November, they return to BRNC for their last spell of education and training there which culminates with the final leadership assessment, the Maritime Leadership Exercise (MARL) which tests all they have learned in their first 28 weeks in the Senior Service.

Trophy 19,186 will be of some interest to members of the Logistics branch.

According to The Royal Navy Day by Day, November 25 saw the introduction of the first instruction book for Paymasters.

However this publication was predated by at least 28 years by the particular trophy, which is the 1824 edition of the Regulations and Instructions for the Pursers of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels.

The contents of this volume are almost exclusively concerned with the victualling of the Navy; it includes chapters on the receipt and custody of provisions and victualling stores, and on the custody, issues and returns of the same.

Trophy lives

details of the accounts to be kept, how provisions are to be surveyed to establish their suitability for consumption and the allowances of food, beer, rum, tobacco

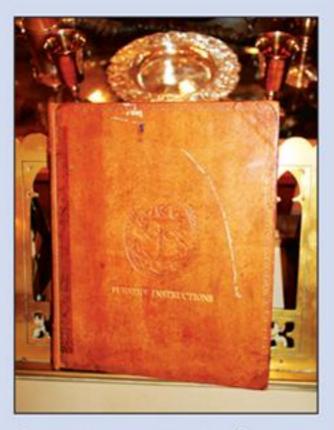
and soap per man per day. The issue of clothing is also recorded in the chapters dedicated to the 'slop accounts', including not only a record of Somewhat surprisingly there all clothing purchased by the

sales of the same and any income from the sale of deceased man's kit.

Presentday logistics officers and their staffs will not be surprised to learn that the

accounts were kept in triplicate no word processors, computers or even carbon paper - and that 'monthly books' were in force by 1824.

guidelines on the physical task of storing ship, but it can be presumed that any fresh meat would have made its own way



do not appear to be any onboard...

TWO SIX.tv

Are you registered to vote?

THE Electoral Commission is trying to get your attention - as some 35 per cent of Service men and women are not registered to vote.

The figures get even worse in the 18-24 age group, where indications are that 60 per cent are not registered and cannot vote.

Clinton Proud, Head of Campaigns and Public Information at the Electoral Commission, said: "There's a General Election coming and we want to make sure no one in the Army, RAF or Navy misses out on having their say.

"There are three ways to vote: in person, by post or by proxy - where someone casts your vote for you."

He added: "As a General Election is usually called at such short notice, the most realistic way of voting for some people not living in the UK, including many serving in the Armed Forces, is to apply for a proxy vote.

"By choosing someone you trust to cast your vote for you, you will get your say, no matter where you are on polling

He urged: "Don't leave it until the last minute - think about it now."

You can find out more information and download a registration form at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/ armedforces

Critical for Command

EVER wondered exactly what it is that makes a Commanding Officer of a

ship a commanding officer? Well, so has the Navy. And over the past two years work has been ongoing to define success in surface ship command and to identify the manner in which these competencies can best be assessed, developed and reported.

Specially commissioned research, along with a detailed review of policy and guidance for Command, Leadership and Management (CLM), has captured and defined the necessary competencies for command.

The resulting Command Competency Framework is published in DIN 2009DIN01-202, and will set out the criteria against which suitability for surface ship command will be assessed and reported through OJAR.

Selection boards will also judge the candidates before them through the same framework.

Pulling together the list of key attributes three areas were consulted: current policy and guidance; CLM literature; and subject matter experts - including CinC Fleet and the Second Sea Lord.

First to policy and guidance which identifed four key areas:

- a) warfare skills
- b) judgement and decisiveness c) leadership
- d) courage and values Next to the analysis of CLM literature which pulled out:
- a) sets a clear vision
- b) inspires motivation
- c) individual consideration d) self-awareness and
- development e) takes responsibility
- f) intelligence and adaptability Lastly to those subject matter

NAVY NEWS

SHIP of the MONTH

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• What qualities mark you out for the burden of command?

experts:

- a) professional expertise
- b) judgement c) personal effectiveness
- d) people skills
- e) motivation

The analysis then turned to bringing the three findings together with five key overarching competencies identified, each with four supporting competency indicators:

■ Conceptualise – to get and share the picture of what needs to be done

- i) judgement
- ii) risk taking
- iii) vision iv) innovation
- Warfare skills the

- professional skills to fight their ship successfully
- i) warfare knowledge ii) platform knowledge
- iii) seamanship and navigation wider professional knowledge
- Create success deliver results
- i) drive
- ii) resilience
- iii) self-awareness
- iv) focus
- Align focus controllable assets by converting plans into action
 - i) moral courage
 - ii) direction
 - iii) empowerment
- iv) subordinate development ■ Interact – work with and through other people
- i) make most of individuals

Picture: PO(Phot) Tam Macdonald

- ii) communication up
- iii) communication down
- iv) inspire From this work a table of positive
- and development behaviours has been drawn up, clarifying the definiton of each indicator.
- Further information from Lt Cdr Paul Metcalfe on 93832

Happy birthday, Nuffield Trust

THIS YEAR sees the 70th anniversary of the Nuffield Trust, which was set up by the great industrialist Lord Nuffield (William Morris of Morris Motors) to provide money for the Armed Services, and has been handing out millions ever since.

Since its birth in 1939 the Trust has given £45 million in grants (worth some £193 million at today's prices) and it routinely allocates about £1million to the Armed Forces every year.

In 2008, Service units received 248 grants for items as diverse as yachts, minibuses, sailing dinghies, rigid inflatable boats, canoes, fitness and weight-training equipment, skiing equipment, mountain bikes, windsurfing, hang-gliding and paragliding equipment, large screen TV sets and DVD and stereos.

Since 1980, the Trust has also given major grants for large RN projects including improvements to Southwick Park Golf Club and Recreation Centre, the purchase of Alexandra House in Plymouth, and enhancements to sports facilities in Portsmouth, RMB Stonehouse, RNAS Yeovilton and HMS Raleigh.

RN units and families can also use tri-service facilities such as the Nuffield Centre on Anglesey, with purpose-built holiday accommodation, a campsite, a sailing centre, climbing wall and swimming pool, all at very low rates.

The Trust began when Lord Nuffield endowed it with a million shares in Morris Motors, worth about £49 million today, to provide 'facilities for recreation' for the benefit of all the Services. The Trust had a huge impact

during World War 2, when it started a subsidised scheme for service personnel transiting London who were sleeping in railway stations.

It also sent radios to the British Expeditionary Force and other



HMS Ambush hit the hills on Trust bikes



Narrow boat Warneford VC afloat with a Nuffield Trust grant

remote units which were having trouble receiving news from Blighty.

Full details on the Trust and how to apply for grants can be

found on the website www. nuffieldtrust.org and the facilities at the Nuffield Centre Anglesey can be viewed at www. nuffieldanglesey.org.uk

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(Older photographs will be in Black & White)

News and information

Deaths

Lt Cdr Gerwyn Williams. Joined the RN 1984 as an Assistant Writer and served in Ark Royal, Brave, Beaver, Battleaxe and Albion. August 21. Aged 46.

Rear-Admiral Hugh Tracy CB, DSC. Went to sea as a watch-keeping officer in the cruiser Shropshire and the carrier Furious. At the outbreak of war he was in the Admiralty Engineer-in-Chief's department; as a lieutenant, he joined Illustrious which included the capture of Madagascar from the Vichy French, patrolling the Indian Ocean against the Japanese, the Salerno invasion and from Trincomalee engaging in air strikes against the Japanese. Commended for his quick thinking during a serious petrol fire in the hangar and the results of an ammunition explosion with the DSC. Returning home in 1944 he took charge of a design team working on aircraft catapults and his final seagoing tour was engineer officer of the minelayer Manxman in the Far East until early 1948. He was training commander of the RN Engineering College at Manadon and captain of the engineering school at Sultan. Promoted to captain 1955 and selected for the Imperial Defence College in 1961. While working for FOST in Portland in 1963 he was promoted to Rear Admiral and appointed Director of Marine Engineering. He led the introduction of a single diesel fuel for all ships, and set in train the conversion of the Exmouth as the gas turbine trials ship, but retired before she got to sea. Appointed CB in 1965. September 7. Aged 96.

Sir Ludovic Kennedy, broadcaster, journalist, and naval officer. His lifelong campaigns against miscarriages of justice were perhaps influenced by his father's treatment at the hands of the Navy in 1921, when as a naval captain he successfully averted a mutiny but was court-martialled and forced out. Kennedy left Oxford to join the war and was commissioned as a sublieutenant. He served mostly in Tribal-class destroyers, including Tartar. Among his many books was Nelson's Band of Brothers, published in 1951. Aged 89

Cdr Joseph 'Joe' Elder Fishwick. Joined Fisguard as a technical apprentice completing his training at Caledonia in 1965 then joined Fearless. Transferred to the submarine service initially serving in Otus; early selection to special duties officer followed in 1974; then the 10th Submarine Squadron, From 1990 at Clyde Naval Base where his commitment to the successful completion of the Shiplift and associated Trident Support Facilities at Faslane was outstanding and he received an OBE for his contribution to the submarine service. Submariners Association, July 3, Aged 65,

Lt Cdr Tadeusz Lesisz. Joined the cadet corps at 13, graduating five years later he studied at the naval officers' school in Torun, then Gdynia. He was serving as a second lieutenant in the destroyer Burza (Storm) when, on the day before German forces invaded Poland she sailed secretly to Britain with other ships of the Polish fleet. After courses he was appointed secondin-command of MGB 53 and charged with protecting shipping in the Channel and reconnoitring the French ports. In 1941 he joined the Cowes-built Polish destroyer Blyskawica (Lightning) and saw action in the Atlantic and Northwestern approaches. In early May 1942 Cowes was raided by 160 bombers and Blyskawica threw up a dense barrage; in gratitude she was given the freedom of the town; later she took part in Operation Torch. In 1943 Lesisz was appointed to Dragon on Murmansk convoy escort duty and Operation Neptune, then returned to Blyskawica patrolling the coast of France and the Bay of Biscay, then the scuttling of about 120 of the U-boats that surrendered in 1945; he was demobilised in 1946. In 1947 he rejoined the RN as Fleet Maintenance Officer, supervising the mothballing of landing ships and landing craft. He was awarded the Order of Polonia Restituta (4th and 5th class), the Valour Cross, the Gold Cross of Merit and numerous British medals. September 23. Aged 91.

Hugh 'Shiner' Wright. L Stoker submarines. Served 1942-46 in Sea Rover, Strong Bow, Spiteful and Truculent (S-boats operating out of Trincomalee). Royal British Legion. July 15. Aged 85.

Brian 'Johno' Johnson. LCEM. Served 1958-70 at St Vincent (Sept 1958 Anson Collingwood, Forth, Adamant, Caesar, Maidstone, Dolphin, Neptune and submarines Ocelot, Ambrose and Onyx. August 18. Aged 66

Peter John Eley. PO Stores. Served WW2 at Drake and in minesweepers. Committee member Sidmouth RNOC. August 31. Aged

Brian 'Brigham' Young. CPOAEM(M) FAA. Served 1961-84 in Squadrons 893, 705, 824 and 845, Culdrose, Portland, Yeovilton and Daedalus. August 23. Aged 64.

James 'Jim' Thomson. Able Seaman. Ganges Boy. Served 1947-59 in Bulwark, Newcastle, Mull of Kintyre, Ladybird and Tyne (1952-54) in Sasebo, Japan and crew of the Admiral's barge during that time; also served in ships during Korean War. HMS Ladybird Association, June,

Joseph 'Joe' Thelwell. AB AA3. Gunner. Served in armed merchant cruiser Alcantara

(1941-43), and Inman (1943-45). River-class

NOVEMBER 2009

Church, formerly the Anglican Church in

Rosyth, is celebrating the 40th anniversary

of its foundation on Sunday morning,

November 15, the eve of St Margaret's Day.

The congregation is now a member of a Local Ecumenical Partnership with Rosyth

Methodist Church, in Queensferry Road,

where they have worshipped since 1996. It is

planned to hold a Service of Commemoration

and Thanksgiving, followed by a lunch at the

church. All past and present members of the

congregation, the choir and the clergy, are

cordially invited to attend. For further details,

please contact Sandra Young on 01383

Union Jack Club, Waterloo, London on

November 21 at 1100. Invitation goes out

to members, relatives and friends of the 836

men who lost their lives from ships Neptune

and Kandahar. Buffet lunch £15 per person.

Contact Graham Davies at gd.davies@

btinternet.com or see the website at http://

Neptune Association's AGM is at the

415021 or Mary Kidd on 01383 872332.

St Margaret's Scottish Episcopal

Reunions

Frigate Association. August 12. Aged 86.

James 'Fiddler' Jennings. RM C/Sgt. Former skipper of Corps Yacht 'Sea Soldier' and well known entertainer; ex Pheasant Pluckers band at the Plume of Feathers on Dartmoor. September 25 in Portugal. Aged

Myles Coleman. CPO Submariner. Served 1975-98 in submarines Resolution, Renown (stbd 1987) and Vanguard (1995). Completed Artificer Training at Collingwood (1989-92) and prior to his discharge Neptune instructing electronics for the submarine missile compartment. Latterly an Electrical Engineering Instructor at Bordon Army

Camp. October 1. Aged 51. Bill 'Jock' Burnett. CPO. Served 1946-73 at St Vincent, Drake, Ocean, Triumph, Mercury (RAF Tangmere); specialising in communications and as a Russian linguist serving in many parts of the world including Cyprus (Aphrodite), Aden, Turkey and GCHQ (President); also Rocket and Indomitable.

September 25. Aged 79. Alfred Webb. Stwd. Served in Chameleon. Algerines Association. October 6. Aged 85. George Harris. PO/SM. Served Mary-Rose and Recruit. Algerines Association.

October 6. Aged 90. Jim Mariner. Able Seaman. As a 21-yearold he was part of a skeleton crew on board Peterel in Shanghai harbour when she was shelled by the Japanese at close range and he was the first to return fire with a Lewis gun, killing several of the enemy; he spent the rest of the war as a Japanese PoW. October 3, Aged 90.

John Gardiner. Able Seaman. Top part of ship and 8 Mess Liverpool (1945-46). HMS Liverpool Association. September 13.

Robert William 'Bob' Sayer. Deep sea diver. Served from 1947 at age 14. His first ship was Zest (Singapore and Kong). He received the Royal Humane Society Medal for bravery for diving into the sea to rescue a shipmate that was being attacked by a shark (although saved unfortunately his shipmate did not survive the attack). October

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Leslie John Nation, AB, Served 1943-45 in Empress and Tremadoc Bay, East Indies Fleet (part of the 'Forgotten Fleet'). Chairman Lichfield, Staffordshire RNA. September 6.

Horace Gammon. Served in Pangbourne, Philoctetes and Myrmidon. Soham & District branch. September 10. Aged 84.

Harry Troughton. Stoker. Served 1941-46 in Combined Operations 474 and in North Africa and Normandy Landings. Kendal branch. September 12

Ken Hooper. Past President and current vice president and assistant welfare secretary Bude branch. September 28. Aged 89.

Len Phillips. AB. Served 1942-46 completing 20 trips on Russian convoys. Northwich RNA. Founder member and secretary of HMS Opportune Association, also the North Russia Club and the Russian Convoy Association. September 23. Aged

David Fiander. AB. St Vincent Boy and served 12 years in Indefatigable, Wakeful, Newfoundland, HMS Newfoundland and St Vincent Associations; a long time agent for SSAFA in No.2 area and secretary of

Maidstone RNA. September 30. Aged 73. Sidney 'Sid' John Hindle. REM on board Chevron 1952-54. 8th Destroyer Flotilla Association and Leeds RNA. September 26. Aged 74.

Brian William Chandler. AB DEMS Gunner. Served 1942-46 on Glen Line merchant ships on convoy duties, Battle of the Atlantic and D-Day Lanings. Dorking branch. DEMS Association, and Normandy Veterans Association. October 10. Aged 88.

HMS ILLUSTRIOUS ASSOCIATION

Dennis Bennion. Served in Illustrious 1948-49 and a Pinnace survivor. August. Ann Lilley. Chairman of Southern branch 2000-01. August 15.

Ann Lytle. June. Lt Alan Norman Pym. Pilot. On board Illustrious for two spells in 1943. July in

South Africa where he lived from 1970. HMS COSSACK ASSOCIATION David L Morris. Served in D57 as a Stoker

Mechanic 1954-56 commission, March. Maurice B Avory. Associate member.

June 13. Peggy Larken. Associate member. June 17. Aged 101.

David G Broom. Commissioned Gunner. Button Boy at Ganges. Survived the sinking of L03; was picked up by Carnation then reboarded Cossack in an attempt to save her but was taken off by Jonquil just before she sank managing to salvage Cossack's battle ensign after the 2nd battle of Narvik. August 10. Aged 86.

Robert James McLean. Leading Seaman (UCI) in Cossack 1955-56. August 21.

RN ENGINE-ROOM ASSOCIATION William 'Bill' Twissell. L/Sto. Served in Victorious, Furious and Olna (relief of Hong Kong 1946). One-time chairman of the association. September 11. Aged 87. Norman Aston. Served in Anthony,

Malaya and Valiant. October 5. Aged 88. Ronald Andrews. Leading Stoker. Served in Glory and Unicorn. October 6. Aged 81.

Ask Jack

Philipp the Duck: Anyone remember the A-boat who adopted Philipp the duck in the Philippines, early 1960s? I'm sure it made the Navy News or something similar as being the deepest diving duck in the world. A bathy dip to about 250ft was carried out with Philipp aboard. Contact Derek Lawbuary at jungfigh@onvol.net or write to Apt. 4, 40 Cross Street, Naxxar, 1863, Malta.

HMS Hood: I would love to know if any of your readers can recall a rating called Willie English on the Hood. We were told he was taken off the ship for a minor operation just before it steamed to engage the Bismarck. Willie did the full stretch and came out a Petty Officer. He was my uncle and hailed from Belfast. We were also told he was torpedoed three times during the war. Please contact John Campbell at jobbinpoet@ yahoo.co.uk or write to 19 Seabank Parade. Belfast, BT15 3NW.

HMS Protector ship's bell: We are lucky enough to be in possession of our battle board and the gangway deck plate. What we are attempting now is to locate the ship's bell. Now although there was another Protector initiated after the Falklands conflict, what we would really like to do is locate the bell from the original Protector that served both down the ice, and in the Falklands between 1955 and 1968. But if the other one is also traceable then news of that one would also be welcome. May we also take this opportunity of advertising for ex crew members of the Protectors. We are at present a very healthy naval association but are always looking out for new members. We are at present some 519 members strong. Contact Keith Towle at keith.gill.towle1@ntlword.com or see the website at http://www.hmsprotector.org or tel: 0115 944 1582

HMS Striker 1965: Will LSBA M W Toomey please contact Charles Addis at 17 Stonebridge Avenue, Bury St Edmunds.

RNAS Dale: Will the ex-signals officer (at Dale in 1945) who rang ex-W/T Op in Lincolnshire (MJA) in August, please ring 01507 463224 again to exchange news.

HMS Proserpine 1941-43: I am trying to find anyone who knew my grandfather, John ('Jack' or 'Shorty') Attwaters, PO Stoker, who served in Prosperine during the early years of WW2. We have this family tale of Granddad taking part in a Norwegian escapade of which we can't put any truth to - nobody, not the National Archives, the Portsmouth Naval Museum; no one can put any credence to our story and of course Granddad isn't around to ask. My Mum and my Aunt don't know the full truth so if there is somebody out there who knew him I would be so pleased for them to contact me! Jane Suggitt at jcs@ventnoriw.co.uk, tel: 01983 855095 or write to 9 North Street, Ventnor, Isle of Wight, PO38 1NJ.

HMS Aphis: Would lan Newton get in touch with John Owen as he is seeking information regarding his father Capt H D Owen and HMS Aphis. Contact John at johndorsettowen@btinternet.com or tel: 01730 827019.

Battle of Trafalgar: I'm researching a particular AB Thomas Collard who served under Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar 1803. I'm also hoping to obtain pictures of the ships Collard served on: Puissant, Ocean, Salvador Del Mundo and Armide (all in the 1800s). Of course any other information your readers can offer would be much appreciated. Contact Derek Hicks at derek@ hicks9319.fsnet.co.uk or tel: 01608 646576.

QARRNS R Class RNH Stonehouse May 1970: Trying to contact any members with a view to a 40 year reunion in 2010 in Plymouth. Contact Angle on 023 9264 4595.

851 WEA/A 25 year reunion: Looking for ex shipmates of 851 A/B/C/D Artificer Apprentices classes with a view to having a 25th reunion sometime between March and June 2010. Contact Simon Wright at simon. wright@bvtsurfacefleet.com or sjsw@ ntlworld.com or tel: 07919 261763.

HMS Cambrian 1944-69: Our association is open to all who served on board Cambrian from the first commission to the last. We hold an annual reunion in the spring of each year. All who would like to join should contact Don Macdonald on 01344 774 386

Sydney Rutherford 'Ford' Christie: Is there anybody who knew my father Sydney Rutherford Christie? He drowned when in the Seychelles in 1975 whilst with HMS Blake, I

Sports lottery

September 19: £5,000 - Mne A W Keightley; £1,500 - LMEA R B Nelson; £500 PO O J Hinton.

September 26: £5,000 - LOM E L Powell; £1,500 - Cpl M J Newton; £500 - WO J R October 3: £5,000 - AB2 C A Browne;

£1,500 - Lt Cdr T D A Brown; £500 - OMW1

October 10: £5,000 - AET R A Belcher: £1,500 - Lt Cdr A E J Livsey; £500 -CPOAEA/M K G Campbell.

Assignments

Cdr J D Lett to HMS Montrose as CO from December 11. Cdr G A Richardson to 824 NAS - TU as CO from November 17.

am looking for information about him, what he was like - good or bad, as there's nobody else I can ask. He was known to most as Ford although I do not know if this was his nickname. Any information welcome. Please contact Julie Christie (his eldest daughter) on 0797 3786 725.

RN Electrical Branch Association: Did you fix fuses? Watch switchboards? Change valves? Tweak transmitters for the ROs? Walk about with an AVO? Charge batteries? Then the Royal Naval Electrical Branch Association is the one for you. Thanks to Cdre Steve Kirby, members of the association will be visiting HMS Collingwood for a full working day to see how they train today's men and women, have lunch in the wardroom and watch Divisions. Did you have lightning strikes on your branch badge? Then visit our website www.rneba. org.uk, download an application form and come join this rapidly growing association. If your old messmate looking for you? For further details contact mike@rneba.org.uk or RNEBA, 7 Heath Road, Sandown, Isle of Wight, PO36 8PG. The association where everybody is excused boots and gaiters -

Lt Pat Vickers RAN: Rhonda Vickers Rolevink is trying to find colleagues or people trained by Lt Pat Vickers of the Royal Australian Navy. He was the first Australian Pilot killed in the Vietnam War, but this was the end of an impressive Naval career that spanned 12 years. During that time he and Lt Ben Bathurst RN in a Wessex helicopter flew to the rescue of a dredger off New South Wales, for which he received a Queen's Commendation. Forty years later, Adm Sir Benjamin Bathurst recalled: "I spent two years as an exchange pilot at RANAS Nowra as an instructor, where I met Pat Vickers, an Australian officer who had spent two years on exchange in the UK. Pat set himself very high standards and was an inspiring aviator." If you have any information on Pat Vickers, please contact: Rhonda Vickers Rolevink, Trafalgar House, 18 William Street, Buderim 4556, Queensland, Australia; phone 07 5476 5208, or email franbryce@bigpond.com.

Nicholas John Tregidga 'Trigs': My father was a Chief Petty Officer Chef, serving on many ships including the Rapid and Illustrious. The pinnacle of his career was being the Officers and Royal Chef on board the Royal Yacht where he served for five years. He was an instructor at Chatham during his last years in the Navy. He will be 80 in December this year, and if anyone out there knew him we would like to hear from you. Contact Vivienne Tregidga at viviennetregidga@yahoo.co.uk, 5 Hallsenna Road, Seascale, Cumbria, CA20 1JH or call 07816 753 664.

RFA in the Falklands War: One of our ongoing projects is to compile a comprehensive list of all those who served in RFA ships during the Falklands War of 1982. We have searched the records at the Registry of Shipping and Seamen, as well as the National Archive. Could we please ask if you served in an RFA in the Falklands War that you contact us so we can record your details. Likewise if you know of anybody who served in this conflict, we would also like to record their details, we want to make sure that our history does not disappear so your help would be greatly appreciated. To contact us, follow the line www.historicalrfa. org/contact-peter-robinson newsletter@historicalrfa.org.

HMS Coventry 1942: I am looking for anyone who may have links to Coventry. I am hoping they might have stories or photos of the ship's company as my great grandfather was killed in the action o Tobruk 1942, his name was Petty Officer George E Platt He had served through World War 1 and retired as Chief Petty Officer, then rejoined at the start of World War 2. Telephone 01258 450956 or K Evans, 45 Hanover Court,

Blandford Forum, DT11 7DF. World War 1 Tank 'Excellent' at Whale Island: Does anyone remember this tank prior to its being removed to Bovington Tank Museum. I am working with a group The Friends of the Lincoln Tank, who are compiling a history of the tanks awarded to towns and cities following the end of the Great War. Our group would like to hear from anyone who can help or knew this machine. Contact Michael Harrison on 0115 965 3314 or m.harrison08@hotmail.com.

Swap drafts

LLogsCS(D) Henderson currently serving on HMS Sutherland, Plymouth, will swap for any Portsmouth-based ship. This is due to residential moves. Contact me on 398-llogscs7@a.dii.mod.uk.

Talking Navy News goes digital

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as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact number, or email patn-rec@hotmail com. A speaker that will take a USB plug is required but this can be obtained from the Talking News, or the file can be played back through a computer.

Contact sheet

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Royal Navy recruitment: 0845 607 5555, www.royalnavy.mod.uk Veterans Agency: 0800 169 2277, www. veterans-uk.info

RN and RM Service records: 023 9262 8779 or 023 9262 8667 Royal Naval Association: 023 9272 3823, www.royal-naval-association.co.uk

023 9254 8076, www.rnrmc.org.uk RNBT: 023 9269 0112 (general), 023 9266 0296 (grants), www.rnbt.org.uk British Legion: 08457 725725, www.

Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity:

britishlegion.org.uk Naval Families Federation: 023 9265 4374, www.nff.org.uk

Seafarers UK: 020 7932 0000, www. seafarers-uk.org SSAFA Forces Help: 0845 1300 975.

www.ssafa.org.uk RN Community: www.rncom.mod.uk Medals enquiries: 0800 085 3600

Royal Naval Museum: 023 9272 7562, www.royalnavalmuseum.org

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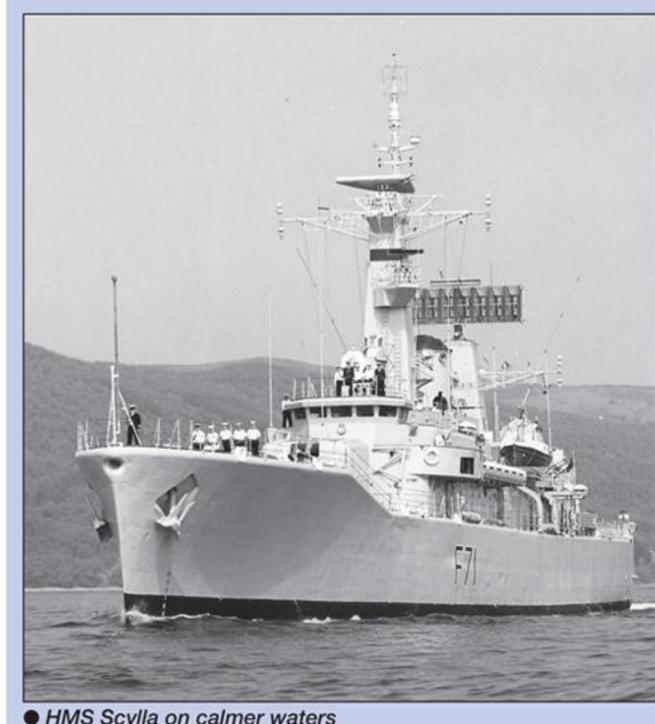
RN Submarine Museum: 023 9252 9217,

www.rnsubmus.co.uk National Maritime Museum: 020 8312 6565, www.nmm.ac.uk Imperial War Museum: 020 7416 5320,

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THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

We flick back through the pages of Navy News to see which stories were drawing attention in past decades...



HMS Scylla on calmer waters

November 1969

SUBMARINERS were welcoming the news that Devonport was to be developed as an operational base to support nuclearpowered submarines.

As most submariners came from south of the border, they would rather serve in Plymouth than Faslane, said Navy News.

The announcement appeared to put the future of HMS Dolphin, in Portsmouth Harbour, under threat, but as the paper pointed out, the Oberon class boats were to be modernised, giving them a life expectancy well into the 1980s, and the investment in training facilities and accommodation at Dolphin had been so great it was unlikely to be phased out in the foreseeable

November 1979

NAVY doctors were hoping that HMS Broadsword and Scylla would run into some rough weather over the winter months, as they were starting trials on a new anti-seasickness pill.

Volunteers in both ships were to fill in a detailed questionnaire, taking into account degrees of nausea, individual remedies, and side-effects.

They were then to be issued with tablets in a controlled 'double blind' test of two drugs, the new one and the old 'pusser's pill,' Hyoscine.

The new drug, Cinnarizine, must have proved effective, as it is widely used to this day under the better-known name of Stugeron.

November 1989

IMPRESSIVE results were recorded by HMS Invincible, where sea-acceptance trials were being held for the world's first multiple Goalkeeper close-in weapons system.

The design of Invincible and her sister ships had not incorporated an anti-ship missile system, but experience during the Falklands Conflict proved an extra layer of defence was imperative.

Two American Vulcan Phalanx had been fitted in the short term to remedy the problem, but their area of fire was limited and they obstructed the flight deck aft. So three Dutch Goalkeeper units were installed, positioned

forward, aft and midships to give an overlapping arc of fire and reduce the obstruction.

Deaths' column and Swap Drafts in December's Noticeboard must be received by **November 12**

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HMS Glasgow (C21/D88): 30th reunion

will be held at the Grand Hotel, Scarborough from April 23 to 26. All ex-crew of both cruiser and destroyer welcome. Write to Garry Eaton (Secretary), 10 Elderwood Avenue, Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire, FY5 5EQ.

HMŚ Ganges Association: Next official annual reunion will be held at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool from April 30 to May 3 2010. Reunions move around the country so that more members may attend without travelling long distances. For information on booking visit www.hmsgangesassoc. org or contact David Jackson at secretary@ hmsgangesadmin.com, telephone 01377

MAY 2010

HMS Saintes Association: Reunion from May 7 to 10 at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea. All former shipmates and guests are welcome. For more information contact Ron Miles on 01404 43177.

HMS Cavalier Association: Annual reunion and AGM at the Riviera Hotel, Weymouth, over the weekend of May 28-31 2010. For full details please contact the treasurer, Marshall Clarke, 1 Kennedy Close, Waterlooville, Portsmouth PO7 5NY, tel: 023 9225 8238, email noblejan@supanet.com.



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He marched them up to the top of Dover

AT the heart of any good school lie high expectations. Duke of York are proud that yet again last summer its pupils enjoyed success both in their GCSEs and A-level results.

didates gained the government's benchmark academic figure of five or more GCSE passes including Mathematics and English. This is well above the national average for both state and independent education.

The A-level results were also very good with 97 per cent of the A2 students passing with grades A-E, 48 per cent of them achieving passes A-B.

This year is a very important year for the Duke of York's as it is celebrates the centenary of the school's move to Dover from Chelsea.

The school was originally founded in 1801 to take the sons and daughters of soldiers who had died fighting for their country in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars.

The school moved to Dover in 1909 and it has continued to thrive. In 1994 girls were re-invited to join the school and it is now a full boarding school for children whose parents are serving in the British Armed Forces.

It is fully funded by the Ministry of Defence

so those who are serving pay far less each term (currently £550) than state boarding or independent

The children have participated in many special Ninety-two per cent of the school's GCSE can- events to celebrate the centenary of the move to Dover. The centenary launch took place in February hosted by illustrious Old Boy the Lord Bishop of Liverpool in the House of Lords.

The school marching band was again invited to play at the Army Rugby Championships in Aldershot in March and at the cricket match England vs West Indies in May.

The school organised a fun day and barbeque for the pupils in June and a special Centennial Parade also took place on June 14 when the whole school marched through the streets of Dover and held a Drumhead Service in the presence of local dignitaries at Pencester Gardens, Dover (see picture above).

The school is now looking forward to continuing the centenary celebrations for the rest of the autumn term culminating in a special Christmas celebration in December.

The centenary year also marks the start of the first stage of a multi-million pound upgrade of the

boarding facilities. See the website www.doyrms.com for news.

Trinity under inspection

CDRE Simon Williams, Director of Naval Personnel Strategy, paid a visit to his home county of Devon to be the reviewing officer for Trinity School Teignmouth contingent biennial Combined Cadet Force inspection.

He was met at the Whitehouse in school by the headmaster Mr Tim Waters who is himself ex RN, the Contingent Commander Lt Cdr Geraldine Poulet-Bowden and sixth formers representatives of RN and Army sections.

Over a welcome coffee, a framed photograph was presented to Lt Col Ray Elliott RM to mark his retirement after 45 years of service. Colonel Elliott founded the contingent and served for 12 years as the first Contingent Commander.

Then it was off to Teignmouth harbour where both the commodore and Lt Cdr Duncan Currie, senior pilot at 849 NAS, hopped aboard a rib to watch the RN Section undertake afloat training with the local RYA centre Seasport. Cadets displayed their proficiency at dinghy sailing,



 Cdre Simon Williams (centre), Tim Waters, headmaster, and Lt Cdr Geraldine Poulet-Bowden, Contingent Commander

Canadian canoeing, windsurfing and powerboationg.

With a complete change of scenery the party was off to the training area on Woodbury Common where Cdre Williams enjoyed an open air lunch with cadets of the Army section in the presence of Major Steve Proctor of 43 Wessex Brigade and Captain

Mark Sainsbury, O/C of 18CTT Derriford, Plymouth.

Led by sixth form cadets there was a series of stances including observation lane, field craft and to the delight of recently recruited year nine cadets, applying camouflage and then concealing themselves with various degrees of success.

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Successful St John's College

ST JOHN'S College is celebrating another successful exam results year with a 98 per cent pass rate, which included 58 per cent of its A-level students gaining A and B grade and 78 per cent recording A-C grades in their exams.

A record number of students gained straight A results. Annabel Massey, Vince Lee, Alex Leung, Javier Perea-Pallares, Maggie Sun, Ali Versi and Sarah Clifford successfully received at least three A grades.

It was all the more remarkable in 18 year-old Sarah Clifford's case

as she has combined her studies with training and competing for Great Britain's synchronised swimming team.

Headmaster of the College Nigel Thorne said: "St John's is extremely proud of all the A-level students.

"The results this year speak for themselves; our pupils deserve their achievements as they have been fully committed to their studies.

"St John's wishes them all the very best in their continued studies and chosen careers."

St John's College is an independent, co-educational day and boarding school for children aged two to 18 situated in the heart of Southsea.

Founded as a boys' school in 1908, the college now attracts over 700 pupils and students to its nursery, lower and upper school and sixth form.

The college's ethos is inspired by the teachings of St John Baptist De La Salle, the patron saint of teachers.

Visit their website at: www. stjohnscollege.co.uk.





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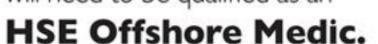
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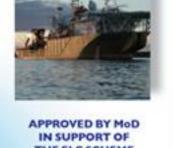






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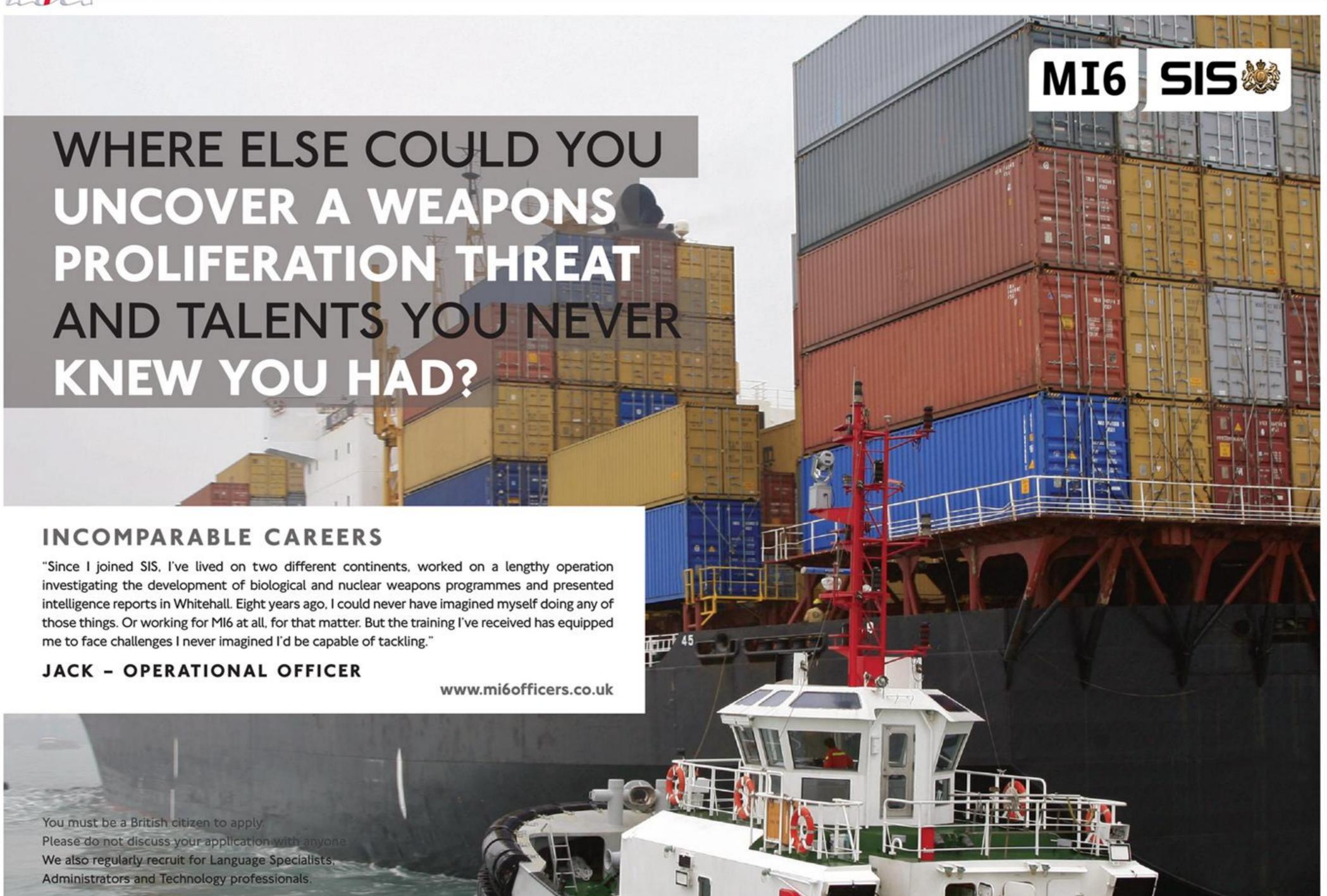
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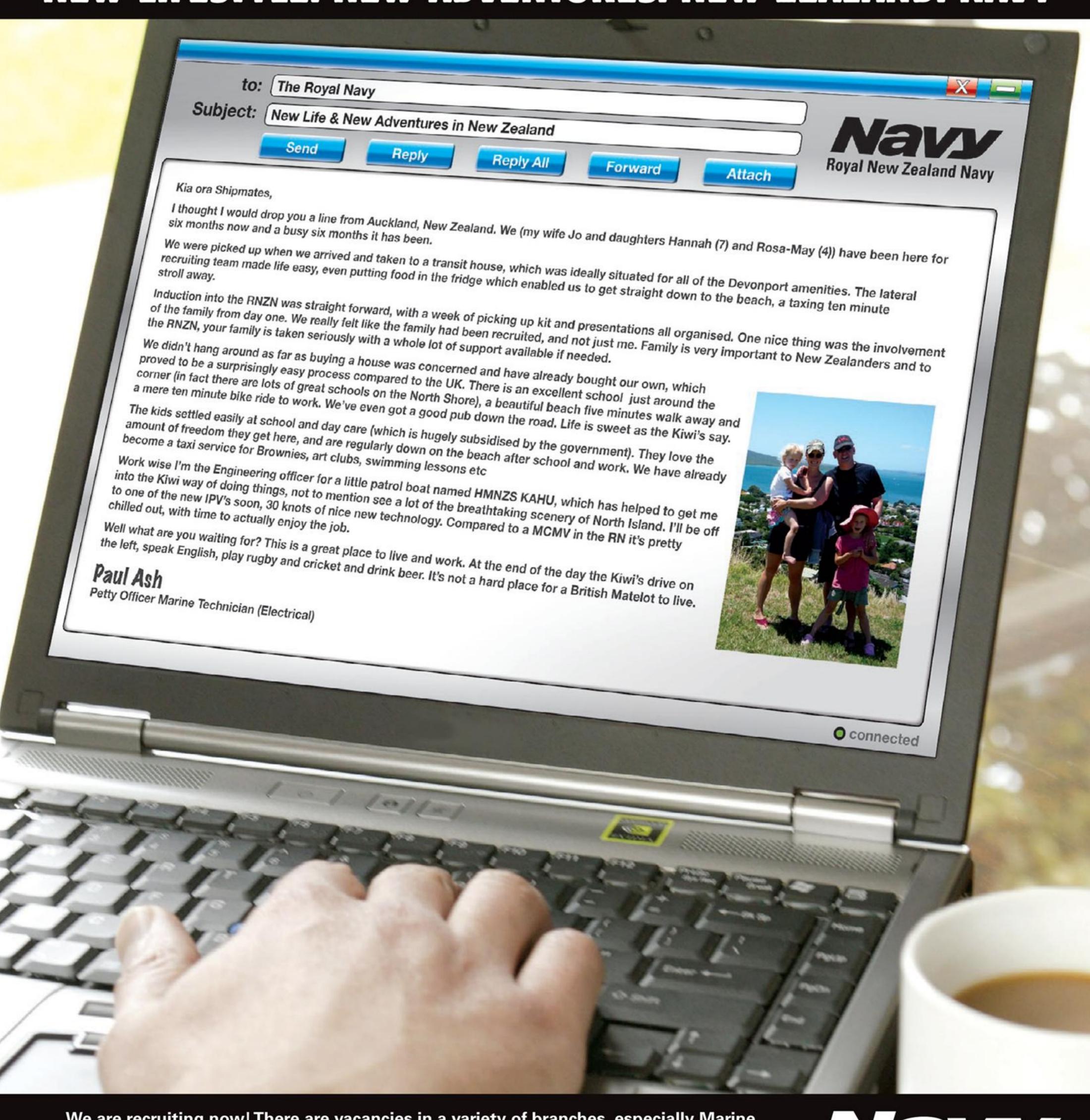
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t low tide

together, but it sits in our patch so I and my team have taken a keen interest."

Lt Col Davies also paid tribute to the Scouts team, led by administrator Sue Abbott at Waterside Lodge, which acted as regatta HQ for the weekend.

The regatta featured four classes of dinghy - Open Bosuns, Junior Toppers, Open Picos and the catch-all Open Portsmouth Yardstick (PY), which covers other recognised Corps sailing craft and additional entrants from other classes.

The windsurfers held their own competition on the southern corner of the lake, well away from the main race course.

Dave Hanley said: "The event we organise here is the highest event at which the cadets can show off their skills at sailing, and my job is to get all the kit here and staff on the water side.

"We bring it in from boating stations and supply the kit, or else they can bring their own boat in for the handicap race."

As the RAF Hawks flashed past the lake, Lt Cdr Hanley leaned over and confided to Capt Mark Windsor, Captain Sea Cadets Corps: "I have to be honest sir, the Red Arrows was the hardest part of the regatta to organise..."

He continued: "There are 60 boats - that is a reasonable size.

"It is not a large regatta in the big wide world, but for this organisation that's a reasonable amount of boats.

"And it will look magnificent when they get going."

All boats competed in four races, with a handicap system and staggered starts meaning that the slower Bosuns got off first, followed by the faster dinghies, ensuring that by the mid point of the race the fleet would be bunching up nicely for some interesting racing and manoeuvring.

And if such manoeuvring causes problems, a protest can be registered, at which point the Protest Committee steps in.

The relevant parties are spoken to and forms filled in before managers can intervene.

Committee members are aware that seasoned racers are competing against enthusiastic amateurs, and they have no wish to nip a growing interest in racing in the bud, so protests are handled with sensitivity, and there is a "softer" option of points deduction as well as outright disqualification.

Four races were held – three on Saturday with one on Sunday - but only three results count for each entrant, allowing competitors to discard their worst performance.

That meant the sailors returned to their accommodation at Altcar training camp, a few miles south, on the Saturday evening with everything to play for - and the result of the fourth race was crucial in the final placings (see right).

Safety is paramount at such events, and the high ratio of staff

to competitors - 90 adults for 110 cadets - was indicative of the level of supervision.

Each competitor hands in a tag as he or she goes out onto the water, and these are returned to them as they come in at the end of a race, ensuring no one is left out on the lake.

Not that the conditions were of particular concern, with the water being no more than five or six feet deep ("if it's not going well, you could get out of your boat and walk back," one adult remarked.)

All looks serene as the boats circle for position on the starting line, but move in a bit closer and it gets a lot more serious, with lastsecond turns to avoid collisions (or not) and a constant chorus of warnings between boats.

But once under way a sense of relative calm returns and the fleet stretches and bunches as further classes join the fray.

The windsurfers, meanwhile, are doing their own thing near the Scout HQ in a competition organised by S/Lt (SCC) Emma Ryder RNR, South West Area Staff Officer for windsurfing.

"Windsurfing has always been a part of the regatta; we struggled with equipment for a time and many units didn't bother, but it's been improving," said Emma.

"For some people it's seen as a dark art - they do not appreciate how easy it is.

"We have ten entrants in the Open class and four in the Junior competition, and each area can only enter two in the seniors and one in the juniors so the maximum we could get would be 21.

"For some they are very inexperienced - just crossing the start line is an achievement.

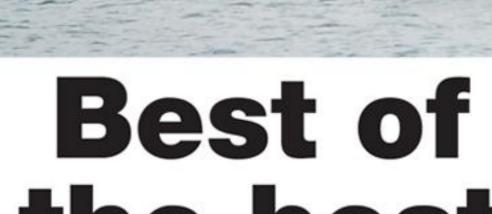
"But this year we have seen the very best."

After their four races on Saturday the Sunday morning was given over to a coaching session, including freestyle techniques.

During races those not involved were able to sample the delights of the bacon buttie stall and enjoy the smooth sound of the Rouge Moodé roadshow - aka Lt Cdr (SCC) Roger Moody RNR, HQ PA and Entertainments Officer (Disco Officer for short) who has been supplying music and announcements for such events for years (cheese, apparently, is still popular amongst discerning

clientele at Corps gatherings...) Capt Windsor, who took a keen interest in proceedings as well as handing out medals and trophies, said: "Having now been in post for two months and seen the wide variety of activities of the Sea Cadets, from summer camps to unit-level boating to national competitions and regattas, I have been incredibly impressed with all that I have seen.

"I think the Sea Cadets are offering brilliant opportunities to our young people and I am really enjoying the job."



WINNERS were declared in each of the four dinghy classes and two windsurfing events; all except the Portsmouth Yardstick result counted towards the overall winner of the regatta.

The bosun class was won by Southern Area, with Eastern second, although the individual title went to Taylor and Taylor of North West, who were sweating on a 'did not finish' in round 3 but claimed a third win in round 4 to take the honours.

and Eastern's Copsey was the individual winner by dint of winning rounds 1, 2 and 3.

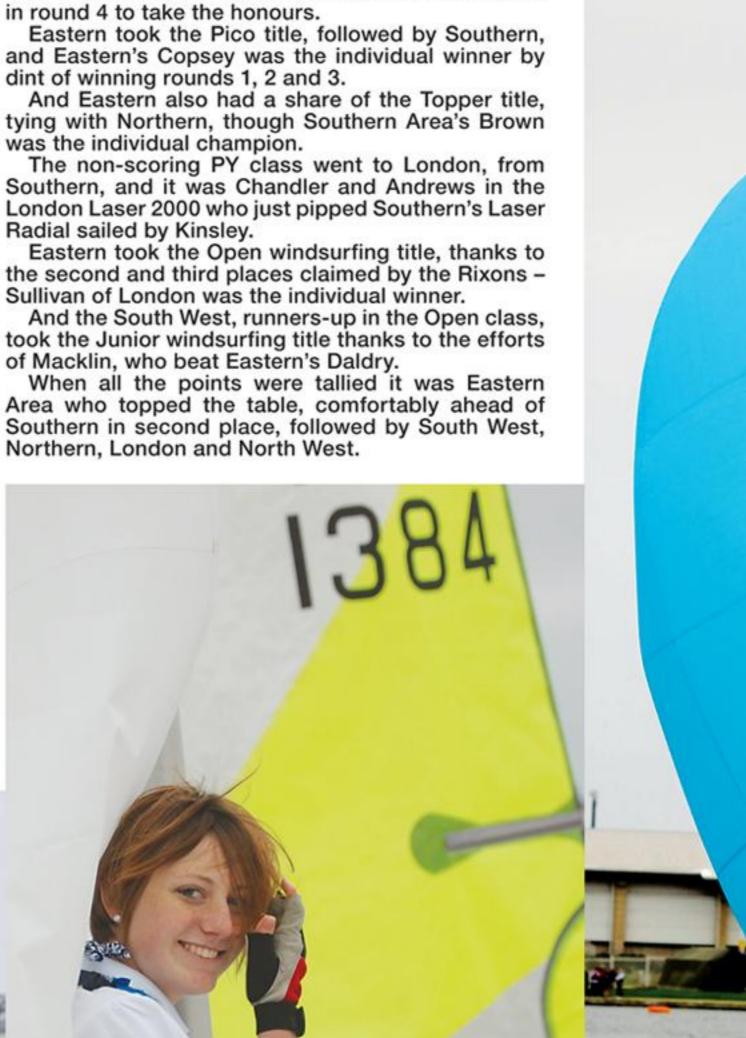
tying with Northern, though Southern Area's Brown

Southern, and it was Chandler and Andrews in the London Laser 2000 who just pipped Southern's Laser Radial sailed by Kinsley.

Eastern took the Open windsurfing title, thanks to the second and third places claimed by the Rixons -Sullivan of London was the individual winner.

took the Junior windsurfing title thanks to the efforts of Macklin, who beat Eastern's Daldry.

When all the points were tallied it was Eastern Area who topped the table, comfortably ahead of Southern in second place, followed by South West,









Hikers follow lines of escape

ONE of the numerous adventurous and training camps and courses run over the summer months by the CCF RN was a sponsored expedition to the Pyrenees, the theme of which was to follow in the footsteps of Allied Servicemen escaping from the enemy during World War 2.

The Navy link? Well, one of the main escape 'lines' was set up by a Royal Navy officer, Lt Cdr Pat O'Leary.

Lt Cdr O'Leary was not, despite his name, of Irish descent - he was Albert-Marie Edmond Guérisse, a doctor in the Belgian army who escaped at Dunkirk and joined the RN.

On one Special Operations Executive (SOE) mission in France, when he was forced to swim ashore, he took the name of a Canadian friend to explain his accent to coastguards.

The so-called 'Pat Line' took hundreds of fugitives back to the UK via Spain, but O'Leary was arrested and sent to a concentration camp.

He was sentenced to death, but the Allies liberated the camp before the sentence could be carried out.

Having crossed the Channel from Portsmouth to Caen, the cadets drove to their base at Ax-les-Thermes, and their first foray saw them climb over the Port del Rat, in which they found two wooden crosses placed on a cairn by members of the Escape Lines Memorial Society in memory of two American airmen who died in the col while heading for Andorra.

The following day the cadets were forced back into France by a massive electrical storm, so they took another route through a col which was probably also used as an escape route.

Having managed one demanding series of mountain walks, the party then prepared and stocked up for a four-day programme in the eastern Pyrenees, achieving the Duke of Edinburgh Gold classification in the process by exploring other possible escape routes.

For details of the expedition contact leader Lt Cdr (CCF) John Owen via HQ CCF RN, who acknowledged the assistance of his team in organising it, namely S/Lts (CCF) Alice Gilks, Stewart Milne and Steven Broadhurst.

The expedition was sponsored by HQ CCF RN, and many staff there gave freely of their time to ensure it ran safely.

Whitehaven helps at lifeboat ceremony

CADETS and staff from Whitehaven unit TS Bee took part in the naming ceremony for the new lifeboat at St Bees Lifeboat Station.

The unit's CO, Lt (SCC) Peter Lucas RNR, said he was pleased that the cadets had been able to support the ceremony in response to a request from the RNLI.

"It was an honour to have been invited, and there was never any doubt that we would attend," said Peter.

"The RNLI, which relies entirely on volunteers and voluntary donations, provides a vital service, and we were pleased that we were able to give our support."

The new Atlantic 85 lifeboat was named Joy Morris MBE in honour of the late Mrs Morris, who had supported the St Bees Lifeboat Station for nearly 40 years until her death in June 2007.

The lifeboat was named by Joy's son, John Morris, who said his mother would have been extremely proud, and perhaps a little humbled, by the honour of having it named after her.

The Royal Marines Band Scotland is scheduled to perform in Whitehaven this month.

The band, based at HMS



Caledonia in Rosyth, is due to appear at the town's Civic Hall on November 28 in a concert staged by the Sea Cadet unit.

Money raised will be split between the cadets and the local Royal British Legion.

Lt Lucas said this was a unique opportunity to see and hear worldclass musicians.

"As far as we know, this is the first time that the Royal Marines Band has been to Whitehaven," he said.

"We are really pleased that they were able to accept our invitation and are looking forward to what should be a superb evening."

The band will be performing a mixed programme including Band era and solo features.

Tickets (£12, £10 concessions) are available from the unit (email rmband09@tsbee.org.uk, tel 019467 27350), from local shops including the Flower Basket in Lowther St, or from the Hall, tel 01946 514960, email: civichall@ northcountryleisure.org.uk

The cadets were formed into

six divisions, each named after

one of the new Type 45s, to give

activities a competitive edge,

and a young officer looked after

input, and the cadets not only

competed in sports and quizzes

but also had to undertake drill

sessions and pass kit inspections

like their regular shipmates,

while action stations and

firefighting drills also kept them

from North West Area's Bravo

Company were able to occupy the

quarters of their big brothers-in-

arms, 9 Assault Squadron RM,

who had earlier disembarked for

the trip by presenting the cadets

with much-coveted HMS Ocean

Cdr Salisbury rounded off

The 30 Marine Cadets

Every department had its

each division.

on their toes.

cap tallies.

a well-earned break.

popular classics, music of the Big

training ship, was pleased to once again take part in the proceedings. **Admiral**

Donkeys parade in

MARSHALLING a parade can

Untutored marching. Drum majorettes. A clutch of mayors.

POCdt George Whitfield, of

Southwark unit, took it all in

his stride at the Harvest Festival

celebrations of the London Pearly

celebration of London Life is held

in the Guildhall Yard, featuring the

Pearly families in all their finery,

morris men, maypole dancers,

drum majorettes, marching

bands, dozens of people dressed

in Victorian costume and the

donkeys, harnessed to authentic

Members of the public and

dignitaries - including all of the

mayors of the London boroughs,

in their robes and chains of office

- bring gifts of food, which are

past and a parade out of Guildhall

Yard, over to Bank and along

Cheapside to St Mary le Bow -

the Cockney church of Bow Bells

The offerings are then unloaded

and taken into the church while

the donkeys and their owners,

after a quick brew-up, make their

parade in previous years, but this

time was responsible for keeping

the various contingents in order.

George has taken part in the

And TS Cossack, the Southwark

This is followed by a march-

As part of the programme, a

London

cause the odd headache.

Donkey carts.

Kings and Queens.

old coster carts.

fame.

way home.

loaded on to the carts.

pays visit BARROW unit welcomed a special guest when Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland was in town.

Rear Admiral Martin Alabaster, who is also Flag Officer Reserves, was visiting the Barrow-in-Furness shipyard of BAE Systems, where the Royal Navy's Astuteclass submarines are under construction.

The admiral saw cadets undertaking a number of activities during his visit, including an inspection of the guard, Marine Cadet training, first aid, seamanship, chartwork and marine engineering.

Rear Admiral Alabaster commended the cadets on an excellent turnout, and said he had thoroughly enjoyed his visit.

Glimpse at life on the Ocean wave



Picture: LA(Phot) Bernie Henesy

DESPITE having recently returned from her gruelling Taurus 09 deployment, HMS Ocean found time for a minicruise to give the next generation of budding sailors a taste of life on the ocean wave.

Seventy Sea Cadets, from units throughout the UK, joined the helicopter carrier at her home port of Devonport for three days at sea – destination Jersey.

The voyage of discovery was the brainchild of HMS Ocean's Executive Officer, Cdr David Salisbury, recalling his own time as a Sea Cadet which inspired him to take up a naval career.

"There's a world of difference between visiting a warship alongside and joining the ship's company working the ship at sea," said Lt Andy Pearson, Ocean's Affiliate Officer.

"We wanted to give the cadets the full Monty."

Second **RBL link** is forged

NEWHAVEN and Seaford unit has been officially linked with the Peacehaven branch of the Royal British Legion during a ceremony at the Meridian Centre in Peacehaven.

The unit is already affiliated to the Newhaven branch of the Legion, but as some cadets come from Peacehaven, and there is a Peacehaven Mayor's cadet, the branch invited them to become affiliated.

The Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex, Peter Field, attended the event, which was hosted by the chairman and secretary of the RBL branch.

He also presented the Officer in Charge of TS Defiance, S/Lt (SCC) Steve Townsend RNR, with a certificate marking the affiliation.

At the same time the Sea Cadet unit was presented with a new Colour, which was handed by the Lord Lieutenant to CPO Rees-Avery.

It was then blessed by the unit padre, Rev Martin Miller, the vicar of St Michael's Church, Newhaven.



 Cadets and St Dunstan's members during their nine-circuit ride of the Ultimate roller-coaster at Lightwater Valley

Switchback supporters

HEBBURN and Sunderland cadets got a little carried away when they decided to attempt the St Dunstan's Cadet Challenge.

A group of 24 youngsters and four staff climbed aboard their coach early one morning and headed south to the Lightwater Valley theme park, near Ripon.

And once there they climbed aboard the Ultimate, the longest roller coaster in Europe and between 1991 and 2001 the longest roller coaster in the world.

The St Dunstan's challenge requires groups of youngsters to complete a 13-mile course, showing mental and physical toughness as well as imagination.

So with the Ultimate providing 2.4km of demanding but panoramic switchbacks, that meant nine complete circuits, with park managers giving the cadets exclusive access for an hour.

The event was organised by CPO (SCC) Derek Brown, and raised money for St Dunstan's, a charity which supports blind ex-Service men and women.

Adding an official seal of approval to the event was a group of St Dunstan's members, who joined the cadets on their ride.

Course yields result

HAVING survived everything thrown at them, from gallons of inrushing floodwater to complicated cerebral exercises, a group of cadets emerged from a week-long course with a valuable result.

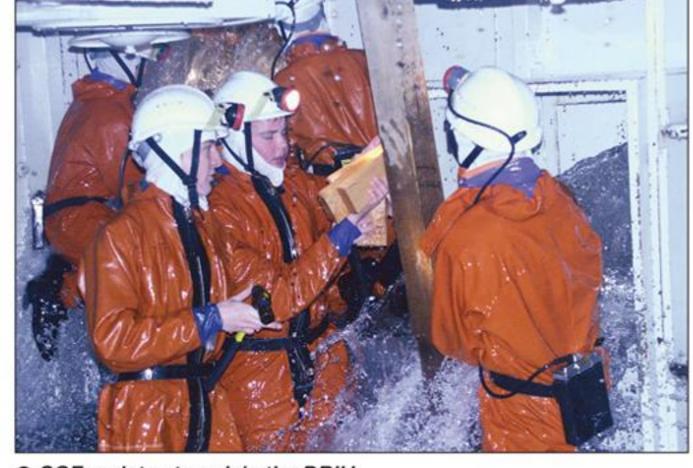
Following on from their efforts, the CCF RN Leadership course has now been recognised by the Institute of Leadership and Management.

This means that those attending and reaching the required standard on all courses from next Easter onwards will have earned themselves a Level Two certificate in Team Leading.

Cadets on the course undertake a variety of tasks, from tabletop exercises to outdoor directed tasks, delivering a lesson, runs on an assault course and a morning in the DRIU (Damage Repair Instruction Unit).

All are designed to give the cadets the opportunities to discover their own potential and the responsibilities and rewards of being prepared to take charge and "make something happen".

According to the cadets, this mix of teamwork and individual leadership skills development, coupled with honest feedback



CCF cadets at work in the DRIU

from the directing staff, make this the best course they go on.

For many it is good preparation for their time as a senior cadet back in their school unit, while for others it is useful for the competitive interview boards for Service or university and college

places to come. The Royal Naval Association has been keen to support these youngsters by donating bosun's calls and chains as awards for cadet leadership courses.

Recognising the potential of these young people as future members of society and leaders in the cadets helps foster the spirit which many RNA shipmates recall from their own time in the Navy.





Sea Cadets from 17 units gather in Liverpool to accept the Freedom of the City

Liverpool honours cadets



 The Ellesmere Port unit band leads the parade of Sea Cadets past the Nelson Memorial in Exchange Flags, behind the Town Hall in Liverpool

MERSEYSIDE Sea Cadets have been given the Freedom of the City of Liverpool for their contribution to helping young people in the region.

The Lord Mayor of Liverpool, Cllr Mike Storey, honoured the 550 youngsters from 17 units with the keys to the city at a reception in the Town Hall.

Cllr Storey said: "As a teacher I have highlighted young people as the theme for my year as Lord Mayor.

"I'm delighted this youth organisation is receiving the highest honour the city can bestow during my term of office.

"I would like to acknowledge the commitment and dedication of those who support the Corps to

provide the skills and knowledge for our cadets to fulfil their future aspirations."

A resolution passed at the start of the year recognizes Merseyside Sea Cadets for their role as a youth organisation with longstanding links to the City and its maritime history.

The first unit opened in Wallasey in 1938, followed by Huyton with Roby in July 1942 and West Derby later the same year.

The units honoured were City of Liverpool, Liverpool (West Derby), South Liverpool, Huytonwith-Roby, Kirkby and Liverpool North, Newton-le-Willows, St Helens, Sefton, Southport, Bebington, Birkenhead, Hoylake, Wallasey, Ellesmere Port (Band), Runcorn, Warrington, Widnes.

Lochaber examines survey ship

LOCHABER Sea Cadets recently had a chance to visit one of Scotland's most important ships as she passed through the Caledonian Canal returning to her home port of Troon.

The 290-tonne, 24-metre Sir John Murray is the Scottish

Environment Protection Agency's hi-tech survey vessel, charged with carrying out surveys round Scotland's coastline as part of the Agency's environmental monitoring and regulatory programme.

The cadets from Lochaber were treated to a VIP tour of the ship which included the engine room, laboratories, working deck, galley and the Starship Enterprise-like bridge.

The normal crew of four, led by Capt Hugh Anderson, is often joined by up to four marine biologists, who carry out survey work using the various nets, dredges, seabed grabs and water sampling chambers.

Lochaber CO Derrick Warner said: "We see the Sir John Murray come through Fort William several times each year and so it seemed too good an opportunity to miss to get the cadets on board."

Beccles pair are qualified

TWO members of staff at Beccles unit have achieved qualifications which will allow them to coach cadets on the water.

POs Tony Easter and Dean Harrington were congratulated by John Ash, of the Broads Authority, after they completed their UKCC Level 1 Coaches Course in canoeing and kayaking.

The course was conducted over several weeks, with smaller courses in safety and rescue, culminating in two long weekends.

The project was supported by the Broads Authority Sustainable Development Fund with a grant of £988, which means the cadets, based near Beccles Quay, are in line for some top-notch tuition.

Switch had band joining **BRNC** camp

A PROGRAMME change which scheduled the CCF Band course at Dartmouth during the main CCF (RN) summer camp has paid dividends all round.

More than 280 cadets from the Corps and CCF, along with Captain Naval Recruiting potential officer candidates, attend the BRNC camp.

Staff Officer Cadets Lt Col Roger Armstrong RM suggested the switch, which would allow the band to provide musical accompaniment for ceremonial events.

The band was trained by Cdr David Oldbury RNR and Lt Edward Peak RNR, supported by RM Band Lympstone, with Cpl Tom Crane as bandmaster and Bugler Damian Challis training the Corps of Drums.

Although some had attended previous courses, for many cadets this was the first time they were marching and playing - but the band still won the highest accolades from BRNC staff.

Instrumentalists performed for the annual Mess Dinner, being joined by the rest of the band for a series of sea shanties as an 'extra', eliciting an enthusiastic response.

Despite the hard work they put into training, the band also joined in the main camp interdivisional competitions, and their performances, according to onlookers, would have put some professionals to shame.

The week is also a useful warm-up for next year's Cadet 150 celebrations, when five cadet bands will march down the Mall to a garden party at Buckingham Palace in the summer.

CCF launches on flight deck

MORE than 100 members of Woodroffe School CCF went on board HMS Albion at Portland for the official launch of their contingent.

After spending the Friday afternoon on board, the Lyme Regis cadets were joined by parents and friends for the dedication parade, which was held on the assault ship's flight deck.

The cadets were inspected by Cdre Jamie Miller, Naval Regional Commander (Wales and West of England), observed by Woodroffe School head teacher Dr Richard Steward.

It is the first time a school CCF naval section has been launched on board an operational warship,

and the Navy ensured it was a special occasion, laying on a demonstration by a Lynx from Yeovilton.

The CO of Albion, Capt John Kingwell, said he was delighted his ship had been chosen to host the event, which was staged while Albion was engaged in training off the Dorset coast.



 Capt John Clink inspects Senior Division cadets with Shirley unit CO Lt (SCC) Dave Nicholls RNR Picture: PO(Phot) Jon Hamlet

Carrier captain calls

THE Captain of HMS Ark Royal visited Solihull to attend Shirley and District unit's drill night.

Capt John Clink was piped on board and invited to take part in Ceremonial Colours before chatting to cadets, some of whom had sailed with his ship from Portsmouth to Liverpool in January.

Capt Clink and unit CO Lt (SCC) Dave Nicholls RNR also toured the facilities at TS Gamecock, looking in on training including the marine engineers, where cadets were stripping down and maintaining canal boat engines and outboard motors.

Capt Clink praised the dedicated staff and supporters of Gamecock: "By selfless hard work and focussed determination, you have managed to create an excellent facility that rivals those in the Royal Navy's new entry training establishments," he said.

He added that the cadets provide "perfect role models" for young people in the area.

After more demonstrations, including rifle drill, Capt Clink presented awards and promotions.

Gun walk raises cash

SCARBOROUGH unit hopes to have raised more than f.1,000towards the cost of future courses by pulling a gun and carriage along a 13-mile route.

The 21 cadets, including nine Juniors, had to dismantle the equipment into seven pieces to negotiate gates and stiles, but still managed to complete the walk in six and a half hours.

The gun walk - inspired by the Royal Navy's Field Gun competition - raised almost £350 along the way, to add to sponsorship pledges.

A plaque commemorating Cdt Sean Park, who died aged 14, is attached to the gun and carriage.

Praise for Cyril

LT (SCC) Cyril Print RNR has been awarded the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire's Meritorious Service Award for almost 30 years of dedication to the Corps.

An ex-RN Wireless Telegraphist (Special) Cyril is a communications instructor, and has seen service with Rickmansworth and Watford unit, and latterly at Gosport.

He has won plaudits for his work training cadets and adults alike, and as an instructor of the National Communications training team.

Pushing the boat out

NEXT May the North West Area boating station TS Palatine (above) will celebrate its 50th anniversary, and planning for the big day has already begun.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Tom Bowman RNR, station superintendent, estimated that the facility, near Rochdale, has trained up to 45,000 people since 1960 - so there could be a big party.

The anniversary will be marked on Saturday May 15, when cadet forces and members of the public are welcome to go along and see what Palatine has to offer in terms of boats and shoreside facilities.

There will also be a dinner and disco, starting at 7.30pm that evening for anyone who has a connection with the centre, including committee members, past officers, staff and visiting units or groups.

Tickets are on sale from this month; email hollingworthlake@ ms-sc.org, telephone 01706 376086, or write to the Superintendent TS Palatine, Rakewood Road, Hollingworth Lake, Littleborough OL15 0AT.

Accommodation at the centre will be limited to staff only, but there are good B&Bs and hotels within easy reach.

Support your Sea Cadets

Volunteer, donate or even leave a legacy.

We need you: get inspired at www.sea-cadets.org or call us on 020 7654 7000.



Caling all Hans

"THE surrender of Germany came not with a bang but a whimper," the great war correspondent Alan Moorehead observed in 1945.

But then Moorehead was in north-west Germany. He wasn't on the Eastern Front – or on the high seas, where war was waged to the bitter end.

The very last ships to fall victim to U-boats were sunk on May 7 1945 – some 20 or so hours after Eisenhower had tersely signalled "The mission of this Allied Force was fulfilled at 3:00 a.m., local time, May 7, 1945."

Indeed, the U-bootwaffe may have lost the war at sea – comprehensively – two years before, but there were more than 60 German submarines at sea as May 1945 began.

Their demise is recounted by Lawrence Paterson, arguably the foremost authority on U-boats in the English-speaking world, in Black Flag: The Surrender of Germany's U-boat Forces (Seaforth, £25 ISBN 978-184832-0376), a work based on published and unpublished material, plus the author's interviews with the dwindling band of survivors.

The surrender of the German Navy a generation before was one of the defining moments in British – and German – maritime history.

The 1945 surrender was every bit as comprehensive, every bit as dramatic, even if it lacked that famous procession of dreadnoughts which marked *Der Tag* in 1918.

And if the U-boat continued the war to the bitter end, so too did the RN. On May 4 1945, the Fleet Air Arm unleashed the wonderfully-titled Operation Judgment to wipe out German naval forces in Harstad, northern Norway.

U711 and a number of supply/ depot ships were sunk by Wildcats and Avengers, while the RAF joined in the U-boat cull the next day, sinking six submarines off Norway.

Other boats ended their days more peacefully. U977 famously surrendered in Argentina on August 17; most tamely surfaced and were escorted into Allied harbours, such as Loch Eriboll or Gibraltar.

Most were sunk, some were handed over to Allied navies as booty to be put into service, such as U995 used by the Norwegians, to undergo trials, such as the formidable Type XXI boats (just entering service as the war ended), some such as U234 were used as gunnery or torpedo targets.

Paterson peppers his excellent, detailed book with first-hand accounts from captors and captives.

He also describes how the German naval archives fell almost intact into British hands – more than 70 years of naval history which remains a treasure trove for historians; copies remain in the files of the Naval Historical Branch in Portsmouth to this

And just in case the chances of survival in a U-boat were too high (three out of four men died), there was the opportunity for German sailors to die as cannon fodder at the war's end.

The 2nd Naval
Infantry Division – mostly
ex-submariners – was thrown
into battle in north-west Germany
in March 1945... the same month
in which it was formed. Other
sailors were committed to defend
Berlin – against the wishes of
the German Army commander,
Gotthard Heinrici.

Karl Dönitz, head of the German Navy – and Hitler's surprise successor – ignored the general's (very just) protestations.

"I tell you the crews of warships are every bit as good as your Wehrmacht troops."

The sailors fighting in northern Germany and Berlin weren't the only land-locked Matrosen (matelots) at the war's end.

The U-boat bases at La Pallice, Saint Nazaire and Lorient had been invested by the Allies since the fall of France (unlike Brest, which the Americans made a point of seizing). They served little purpose other than to tie down Allied troops and devour re-supply forces (the Luftwaffe suffered heavily trying to ferry mail, ammunition and medicine to these forlorn outposts).

The fortresses surrendered, like the rest of the German Armed Forces, in May 1945. U-boat ace Jürgen Oesten spent two years in captivity. "I think the Allies viewed us as Super Nazis as we had kept fighting a lost battle."

They were not and nor were their boats. Most were sunk under Operation Deadlight at the war's end – not an act of vengeance or malice, says Paterson, more an act of mercy. "The boats were neglected and barely seaworthy by the time of their destruction," he points out.

Today there are just four WW2 U-boats left around the world, but the power of these grey wolves to captivate remains as strong as ever.

■ ANOTHER doyen of the Kriegsmarine is Jak Mallmann Showell who has updated his standard work on the subject for the 21st Century.

Hitler's Navy: A Reference Guide to the Kriegsmarine 1935-1945 (Seaforth, £35 ISBN 978-1848320208) is a

lavishly-illustrated oversize introduction to every facet of the subject:

the ships, the organisation, the campaigns, the uniforms, the awards.

And as a reference guide do not, of course, expect anything too in-depth (although an excellent annotated bibliography points readers in the direction of a myriad of reading material, in English and German, if your appetite is

Aside from updating that bibliography, this revised guide features some stunning colour images of U-boats (presumably originally produced for the glossy wartime magazine *Signal*), and a very useful illustrated guide to ranks, uniforms and badges (of which, as in the RN, there was a plethora).

whetted).

Sink the Bismarck (again)

THE dramatic circumstances surrounding the first and last cruise in 1941 of the German battleship Bismarck have been covered in many books over the years.

This new one is by two Swedish authors, Niklas Zetterling and Michael Tamelander. The former works at the Swedish National Defence College and is best known for his studies of the Eastern Front.

With his co-author he has published joint studies of the Normandy and Norwegian campaigns.

This book seems to be the authors' first move into the 'pure' naval field, the first of a pair of works on the sister ships Bismarck and Tirpitz, writes Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford.

There is not much really new in the Bismarck book – Bismarck: The Final Days of Germany's Greatest Battleship (Casemate, £19.99 ISBN 978-1-935149-04-0) – but it is a good read and does the subject justice.

The British and especially the German sources, both secondary and primary, have been trawled once more to produce a comprehensive and interesting account that stands comparison with any.

The first-hand accounts of Mullenheim-Rechberg and Ted Briggs receive particular attention and, as the authors say, they developed a special acquaintanceship with both. When the book was written the German officer had already died; sadly he has now been followed by Ted.

What is most useful from the book's unusual provenance is the neutral approach to a story that has previously been told from a British or German perspective.

This gives the book a particular new and refreshing flavour that makes it an especially worthwhile addition to the Bismarck library.

There are, however, drawbacks. As the book, from a primarily American publishing house, is not translated into American spelling, it looks as if the Swedish authors wrote it in English.

Their script did, however, need some further editing to give it the proper language to make it seem as authoritative as I think the book really is.

The authors compounded their linguistic challenge by a selfconfessed desire to keep seamanlike terminology to a minimum with the aim of attracting the widest range of readers.

This produces some doubtful results. The persistent use of 'machine' for engine gets a bit wearing as is the use of 'corporal' as a rank for seamen and 'division' for squadron of both ships and aircraft.

Gunnery control positions are not 'turrets' but director control towers. The complexities of British air organisation also seem to defeat the authors both in terms of ranks and organisation. The uninitiated reader might think from his short biography that Eugene Esmonde was still in the Royal Air Force in 1941.

It may be a linguistic problem also when Bismarck and Prinz Eugen are described as being 'at sea' when they were photographed by 'Lieutenant' (Flight Lieutenant) Suckling near Bergen. They were in fact at anchor – as the reproduction of his famous picture in the book clearly shows.

The Swedish dimension does have its uses however.

One of the first sightings of Bismarck's sortie had been by the Swedish cruiser Gotland, news of which had been leaked to the British via the Norwegian Naval Attaché in Stockholm. The Swedish intelligence officer who did so has previously been identified as a Major Tornberg but he never existed. It was probably a Captain Ternberg who passed on the information to the Norwegians.

The authors usefully put the Bismarck sortie into the context of previous voyages by German major units, especially Operation Berlin the cruise of Scharnhorst and Gneisenau (correctly identified as 'battleships') in January to March 1941 under the command of

The Grove Review

• U128 in Kiel Harbour. The boat sank more than 80,000 tons of

From: Jak Mallmann Showell's Hitler's Navy

shipping before she was sunk during 'bloody' May 1943

Admiral Lütjens, who was to go down in Bismarck.

Lütjens' skill as a raider commander is recognised, as are his difficulties of operating in an ocean commanded by his opponent. It is a shame that this intelligent and calculating officer was portrayed as such a bombastic Nazi oaf in the classic film Sink the Bismarck.

The authors' discussion of the vexed subject of sinking of the Hood is interesting and fair. The Germans in Bismarck considered the 'Mighty Hood' to be their opponent of choice and could hardly believe it when she came into sight on the morning of that fateful May 24.

The authors accept that the actual nature of the fatal penetration of the ship will always be uncertain but in a footnote they give their theory that the shell penetrated Hood's side, which, as my old sparring partner Bill Jurens has explained, is entirely plausible.

The authors do however agree with me that there was secondary explosion forward. They quote 'Corporal' (Able Seaman) Tilburn seeing a "tremendous flame between the bridge and B turret," the origins no doubt of the Hood's conning tower's long journey from the wreck and Ted Briggs' clear memories of a "sheet of flame".

The authors also quote Coxswain French's key observation from Prince of Wales of "flames shooting up from the water" along most of the ship's starboard side and his seeing the ship break ahead of 'A' turret, both observations being reflected in the actual wreck that has lost most of its starboard plating as is indeed broken exactly where French saw it happen.

Bismarck was herself damaged by Prince of Wales in this engagement and was forced to abandon her mission.

She shrugged off the attack of Esmonde's Swordfish from Victorious, the miracle being that the carrier's untrained air group carried out any attack at all.

The authors are refreshingly positive in their assessment of the features of the much derided biplane torpedo bomber – spotter-reconnaissance machine which, eventually, flying from Ark Royal, sealed Bismarck's fate.

The fruits of the latest dive on Bismarck seem not to be reflected in the authors' account of the fatal damage inflicted on Bismarck's stern but they do succeed in their attempt to put over the atmosphere on board Bismarck during its last doomed night.

The story of the final action is accurately and fairly told. There is a very valid defence of Admiral Tovey's natural desire to sink the ship by close range gunfire that should have worked if Bismarck had not had such a formidable protective system.

Certainly suggestions that somehow the British were taking revenge on Bismarck's ships company for the loss of Hood ought to be consigned to the dustbin they deserve. Her flag was still flying; the bombardment had to go on.

Although they do admit it is rather sterile, the authors come down on the scuttling side of the debate on the final cause of Bismarck's foundering.

Their point that, even if she had not been torpedoed by Dorsetshire, her scuttling measures would have taken her down is a valid one. I do, however, think they put too much stress on the lack of implosion damage on the wreck as evidence of scuttling as the primary cause; torpedo hits would surely have made the flooding of the wreck even more extensive. Again the latest diving evidence,

which would have reinforced the authors' view, is not cited.

I have to admit to having enjoyed this book. The little niggles did not put me off, indeed they endowed the work with a certain Scandinavian charm. My only serious gripe is that the photographs are mostly common views and not very exciting.





Working (MI)9 to 5

THERE are many stories of the clandestine war fought by the Royal Navy between 1939-45.

Tales of X-craft operations, 'the man who never was' and the Shetland Bus are pretty well known.

Not so perhaps the work of MI9 (the number of nebulous military intelligence organisations went all the way up to 19...) charged with supporting resistance movements in occupied Europe - and helping PoWs and important figures escape.

Former fisherman Ronald Stephens found himself working for this shadowy organisation aboard HMS Tarana, a trawler based in Gib.

On the Rock, the ship's company would wear naval whites in summer with HMS on their tallies, while the White Ensign fluttered on the grey-hulled Tarana.

But once out of harbour, the hull was hurriedly re-painted, the White Ensign lowered and the Portuguese flag raised – hence the name of this memoir HMS Tarana: Under Two Flags (Ten Bells, £9.75 ISBN 978-0-9531269-4-1) – while the ship's company dressed as any good Portuguese fisherman would.

Tarana made numerous trips to the coast of southern France to collect 'parcels' - downed airmen, French politicians, Polish refugees, who were informed about the boat's arrival via clandestine messages on BBC foreign-language broadcasts.

The most famous rescue Tarana conducted was Operation Bluebottle in the summer of 1942.

The phrase Les Marrons sont cuites (the chestnuts are cooked) was broadcast... and scores of parcels were collected from the beach near Perpignan. They were taken to Gibraltar in foul seas.

"The air was thick with the stench of sick and dirty bodies but with the weather so atrocious no hatches could be opened to let in a bit of fresh air," Stephens recalls.

"The water was strictly for cooking and drinking only, so no one could have washed - even if he'd had a mind to.'

It's a shame the author doesn't go into slightly more detail about the nuts and bolts of these missions - it may well be modesty on his part, but the Tarana's crew were brave men, as evidenced by France's award of the Croix de Guerre to them.

But Stephens does give an excellent - and very lively account of life in one of His Majesty's Trawlers, life in Gibraltar in the eye of the storm such as the work of the burial ship HMS Laurel, and the liberation of Marseille.

Tarana was the first Allied ship into harbour in September 1944 (Allied engineers blew up part of a blockship so she could sail in) and ended the war in the Med performing general duties, ferrying prisoners and mail around.

She was finally brought back to England and returned to her original owners. "She had never deserted us or let us down," says the author as the ship's company left Tarana for the final time. "No throat was without a lump and

few eyes were dry."

■ Navy News readers can buy the book for the discounted price of f.7.50 (including postage) from the publishers at 21 Burrs Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, CO15 4LA, quoting the reference 'RNN'.

Tales of the Stone age

IN THE streets of Plymouth there was singing and dancing.

Sailors and soldiers shook hands with each other - and with complete strangers. Sirens and hooters blasted constantly. People rolled up newspapers into trumpets and bellowed their delight

The bells of the city's churches chimed, while Plymothians hung the Union Flag from any building - or object - they could find: trams, poles, windows.

The city's pubs closed early. They didn't want a repeat of the "wild and unrestrained behaviour" in Plymouth which had followed the relief of Mafeking.

The date is not May 8 1945. It is November 11 But this is how Britons celebrated the end of the Great

War - and this is what William 'Bill' Stone experienced. In the final years of his life, Bill Stone came to symbolise the sacrifices made by his generation alongside fellow WW1 veterans Henry Allingham and Harry Patch.

TV directors would show footage of men going 'over the top' while reporters would bang on about the 'futility of war', 'slaughter', 'senseless sacrifice'.

But as the late senior rating reminds us in his excellent memoirs Hero of the Fleet (Mainstream, £17.99 ISBN 978-18459 65082), it wasn't seen like that at the time.

It's ironic that the Devonian would be singled out as one of the nation's last Great War veterans: he never saw action in the 1914-18 (he was still undergoing training in Devonport, training which was protracted by

And the media focus on Bill's WW1 career unjustly ignores what followed: a quarter of a century's distinguished service.

Indeed, Bill Stone's life is an echo of the RN – and the nation – in the first half of the 20th Century.

He joined the fledgling Boy Scout movement. He was struck down by the flu pandemic in 1918. He witnessed the scuttling of the High Seas Fleet. He served as an engine driver during a rail strike. He was part of the transition of the inter-war Navy from one of big guns to a submarine hunting and escort force. He experienced the Empire in the halcyon days of peace when men did indeed join the RN to 'see the world'.

To the very end of his life, Bill Stone was fêted by the HMS Hood Association (and sang unrepeatable ditties at their events...). He took part in what became known as the 'Empire cruise', a flag waver intended to rally Britain's distant colonies and remind the world of the greatness of the RN.

His memoirs give a fascinating insight into what became known unofficially as the 'world booze': the heat of Sierra Leone and South Africa (in days when air conditioning meant sleeping on deck); the warnings of rampant venereal disease in Singapore; the 140 men who deserted in Australia in the hope of a better life; the Maoris and Fijians who welcomed the visiting sailors with festive dances.

There are some choice extracts from journalist Scott O'Connor's tubthumping Empire Cruise which perfectly capture a middle-class Briton's view of the inter-war world: of Sierra Leone - "if the hand of England were removed from this Colony it would be a disaster for its people"; of the Empire – "we alone of the great nations engaged in the war had begun to pay our debts and it was plain to all men that our word, long honoured, would continue to be our bond"; and of the British sailor "every man on the ship becomes a sort of envoy from the Homeland".

Like HMS Hood, Bill Stone would have to wait two decades for his first taste of active service. It came with a vengeance: Dunkirk.

He sailed three times with HMS Salamander to rescue troops – "the most terrible experience of my life". It may have been described in the newspapers as some great triumph, but the experience for the ordinary sailor was rather less glorious or victorious.

"The bodies of the clothed and the naked were covered in oil, which coated large sections of the sea as the swell and tides either took them out or brought them back to shore.

"The dark nights were alive with the sight of tracer bullets and the sounds of gunfire."

> He was Mentioned in Dispatches for his service with HMS Newfoundland in the Med, particularly during the invasion of Sicily when the cruiser was torpedoed.

"It was a dramatic scene down below," he writes, "but we stokers weren't prone to panic. On many previous occasions I had been fighting imaginary fires and repairing make-believe destruction, sometimes in the

Newfoundland made Malta and eventually Boston in the USA for repairs.

dark."

Bill's last service to his country came on the German island of Sylt making sure the Nazi resistance movement, Werewolf, didn't flare up in 1945 (it didn't).

To reach the remote island, he had to pass through Hamburg - pounded by Allied bombers in July and August 1943.

"I remembered how I had wept as walked through the devastation of Plymouth and was somehow glad to see it was not only the British cities that had suffered," he recalled.

"However, seeing the effects of the Allied blitz and the many starving, homeless people lining the street was another matter. It was terrible to see such destruction, no matter which side was the victim."

Britain lost all three of its last WW1 veterans this year; Bill Stone passed away in January.

All three left memoirs and Bill's are undoubtedly the most coherent and comprehensive, an important addition to our literature on the lives of the lower decks between the wars and during WW2.

Add to that the extra information and accounts included by the editors and you have a gem of a book which brings Bill and his

He ends his tale with 90th anniversary commemorations of the end of the Great War which will leave many a reader with a tear in their eye.

"Sometimes I can hardly believe that me, a farmer's boy from Devon and now well over a hundred, should have been to so many important events and met such wonderful people," he wrote just weeks before he

"I feel sure that someone has been taking care of me over all these years. I only have to think back to Dunkirk when, with ships sinking all around me, I said: 'God help us' - and He did."

Enjoy an

Immediate Response

IFYOU didn't rush and buy Maj Mark Hammond's 'hoofing' account of life as a Royal Marine flying Chinooks in Afghanistan following our review last month, here's a chance to get hold of a copy for free.

We described the WAFU's book as "a brutally-honest account of life on the ground and in the air".

Those nice people at *Immediate* Response's publishers, Penguin, have three copies of the green beret's memoir to give away.

To win, tell us the name of the 2001 film by Ridley Scott depicting a raid by US forces to seize warlords in Somalia in 1993; the raid has become commonly known as the 'battle of Mogadishu'.

Send your answer, plus your contact details, by email to immediateresponse@navynews. co.uk or in the post to Immediate Response Competition, Navy News, Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, PO1 3HH.

Closing date is mid-day on Friday December 4 2009 and the usual Navy News competition rules apply.

■ THE winners of the Man Down competition in our September edition are: Mark O'Halloran, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset; Stephen Burns, Fareham, Hants; Terry Cotter, Sittingbourne, Kent; Steve Dunn, Wallsend, Tyne-and-Wear; D O'Gorman, Cippenham, Berkshire; Mrs A Yates, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton; P Sisson, Keyworth, Notts; V McMillan, Emsworth, Hants; N A Worwood, Salisbury, Wilts; R G Bond, North Bersted, W. Sussex.

More than mere criminals

RESPECT to Ross Kemp.

You may (or may not) like him as an actor, but he's carved out an admirable niche as a documentary maker.

Not in the Desmond Wilcox, John Pilger, Michael Apted curethe-socio-economic-problems-ofthe-world sense, more in the Chris Terrill prepare-to-get-your-handsdirty sense.

He's twice joined troops on the front line in Afghanistan, he's been on the mean streets of various cities to look at gang culture, and earlier this year he was filmed looking at the pirate problem in Somalia.

A spin-off of that documentary is Pirates (Penguin, £16.99 ISBN 978-0-718-15443-1) which divides its time between land and sea.

The latter was spent with HMS Northumberland escorting shipping to Somalia over the winter - and running the pirate gauntlet in doing so.

Kemp was an 'RN virgin', so the guys in the senior rates mess made him feel at home: a picture of Sharon and Roly the dog from EastEnders pinned to the underside of the bunk above and a 'gentlemen's' mag to 'read'.

Don't expect a literary masterpiece, but if you want something which spells out in very simple, honest terms what the RN does and why it does it, this is it.

In fact it's about the best overview of the problem, written in layman's terms that you'll find.

Kemp explains a very problem complicated uncomplicated terms - and that's no bad thing if you're trying to spread the anti-piracy, and pro-RN, message.

His with time Northumberland taught him that he "would have to look at what was happening not only out at sea, but also on land" and that the Gulf of Aden is not a small stretch of ocean.

"Ships were below dotted around us," he says of a flight in Northumberland's Merlin, "but even though there were many of them, they were insignificant compared to the vastness of the ocean."

During the presenter's time aboard, one ship, MV Northumberland was told not to engage the enemy in case the brigands vented their anger on the hostages. For the Merlin crew, their GPMG locked and loaded, it was "f**king frustrating". It was perhaps the right decision. After two months, the Saldanha's crew were released unharmed (a ransom of nearly \$2m was paid).

What also comes through is that pirates aren't some cardboard cutout Hollywood villains. You may despise what they do, but in many cases they are desperate people acting desperately.

"Foreign ships have made a beeline for the Gulf, hoovering up the precious fish stocks - to the tune of \$300m a year - to sell around the world, destroying the livelihood of these Somali fishermen," Kemp points out; the average Somali lives on under \$2 a day.

Unlike the people traffickers in the region who 'help' Somalis cross the Gulf of Aden to Yemen (illegally). They earn a fortune and don't care whether their 'cargo' reaches its

destination or not. Northumberland and Kemp came across a dhow crammed to the gills with 'fishermen'. "These people could have been fishermen, but you'd have more luck tickling trout than trying your luck with that kind of tackle.

The second half of Kemp's book looks at the problem on land - and not just in Somalia, but also the Saldanha, was seized by pirates; Malacca Strait and Nigeria where there's a less-publicised pirate scourge.

In many cases, the pirate operation in Nigeria is run along Mafia-esque lines.

Yet here too issues on land are driving actions at sea. Nigeria makes \$40bn a year from its oil reserves; a good \$30bn of that ends up in the pockets of one per cent of the populace, while 90 million Nigerians live on less than a dollar a day.

And if the Somali pirates are seen as local celebrities, those in Nigeria are seen as superhuman. A policeman told Kemp adamantly that bullets would simply melt upon striking the skin of a pirate. "It does. I have seen it. They have

What strikes Kemp is that the pirates themselves are a fearless bunch - but not in the same way that a fundamentalist in Afghanistan are fearless.

"If pirates don't fear a Type 23 frigate, then they don't fear anything," he points out. "A merchant vessel was taken from under our noses despite the impressive military presence."

This is a really good read and gets to the rub of the issue better than any academic study or work by a celebrated maritime expert. And because of its author's reputation, it should enjoy a wide audience far beyond those who normally pick up nautical tomes.

"Piracy is a seaborne menace that has its roots in poverty and political unrest on land," he concludes. "And long as these continue, pirates will always take

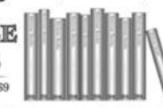
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WIRSHIPS

GUIDE TO THE ROYAL NAVY 2010 The fifth edition of our successful

profile of the Royal Navy, its equipment and global operations is due to be published November 2009.



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SWIMMER Cpl Joe Tellet's outstanding achievements in the pool earned him the coveted title of Royal Marines sportsman of the year.

The NCO picked up bronze in the 50m freestyle and gold in the 100m at the Bath Grand Prix, qualifying for the British Championships – trials for the World Championships.

He dominated the Western Counties event, picked up numerous golds (and broke a few RN records) at the Welsh Masters.

Joe was asked to compete for his home town, City of Southampton, and to swim a lead leg for them in the 4x100 freestyle relay, which qualified for the final. The team stormed into first place with a Hampshire relay record.

At the British Championships he posted a personal best in 50m freestyle (23.27s) in the semis and claimed sixth place in the final, followed by two golds and a silver at Millfield and another personal best in the 50m freestyle (.27s shaved off the previous time).

Sports official of the year is WO2 Stan Bloomer. A PTI in the Corps for 15 years, Stan has been a stalwart of RM squash throughout that period after initially specialising in the triathlon.

Since the mid-Noughties, he's been secretary of the sport and has helped to reinvigorate RM squash, organising three highly-successful Corps championships, encouraged talented young players, arranged a flourishing, regular coaching programme for all abilities and guided the Royals to the Inter-Command championship in 2007 and runners-up last year.

He also found time to organise a squash tour of South Africa and is planning another overseas trip with his squad now 3 Cdo Bde are home from their tour of duty in Afghanistan.

As for team of the year, that honour falls to the RM Golf Society, the first command team in history to win both the strokeplay and matchplay titles at the RN championships in 2007 and 2008. The Royals also enjoyed a clean sweep of events in the 2008/09 season, with C/Sgt Loams winning the RN individual event and CTCRM winning the Navy Cup.

Tignes age kicks in

2010 sees big changes to the RN Alpine Championships: not only is the event moving to the world-class ski resort of Tignes Val Claret in France, but a new tour operator is also in charge, writes Lt Cdr Nicky Cullen.

Tignes is served by the large ski area L'Espace Killy, with over 300km of pistes served by 97 lifts and two high speed underground trains.

There are areas available for all standards of skiers and snowboarders from the absolute beginner to the expert thrill seekers. A ski tranquille area allows newcomers to get miles of snow under their board/skis and progress rapidly to the more challenging slopes.

There is incredible off-piste skiing as well as a half pipe, boardercross course, some great freeriding and the 1992 Olympics downhill course should skiers feel up for it.

More importantly for all RNRM competitors, thanks to its altitude, Tignes is a 'snow-sure' resort!

As for the tour operator, the Event Travel Company will be in charge there.

Everything connected with the championships – accommodation, lessons, racing, membership applications – can be booked with a click of the mouse.

Dates of the championship are January 9-16 (training week), 16-23 (race week).

Further information at www. rnwsa.co.uk or book at www. eventtravelcompany.com



Kerry's heroes

AFTER mixed fortunes through the regular season Navy **golfers** headed to the Inter-Services Championships played over the two testing but delightful courses at Saunton Golf Club, north Devon.

The ladies were defending the title they won so convincingly at the Berkshire last year, although, on paper, the RAF were favourites. The RN men, albeit a couple of players short of full strength, still had a strong team and were confident of success, writes Cdr Gary Skinns RNGA.

After a full day's practice on the Monday, things got under way in earnest the following day, but by virtue of being this year's lead Service, the Navy sat out this first competition day to observe the Army taking on the RAF in both events.

The RAF triumphed in both: a narrow win for their men and a slightly more convincing victory for the ladies. The results for both the RN and RAF ladies matches against the Army were to prove significant at the end of the event.

Day two got under way with disastrous effect for the men in the five foursomes matches. Although three out of five games went to the penultimate or the final green, the Navy finished on the losing side in all five.

Team captain PO(NN) Scott Gilbert (Navy Command) gave his troops both a roasting and a rallying call during the lunch interval and the afternoon singles fared far better.

Gilbert himself led from the front in the battle of Service champions, duly despatching his Army counterpart 4 and 3.

With further wins from Sgt Richard Baker (RAF Brize Norton), ETME Dave Thomas (HMS Liverpool), CPO Lee McCathie (HMS Blyth) and Mne Jake Herdman (FPGRM Faslane), the Navy took the singles – but not by a sufficient amount to prevent an overall 5½-9½ defeat.

Special mention should be made of Thomas and Herdman, both newcomers to the squad this season and making their Inter-Services debut.

The ladies meanwhile fared better on the west course overcoming the Army by 8½-3½. Dropping just a half point in the morning's four foursomes proved the platform for the ladies with the half coming from the pairing of CPO Julie Kavanagh and Lt Cdr Charlotte Bull (HMS Endurance).

Wins were recorded by CPO Lee Tubbs (DLO Yeovilton)/PO Nikky Wade (RM Poole), Lt Lauren Hulston (824 NAS)/S/Lt Hazelle Garton (Sultan) and PO(PT) Wendy Briggs (RNAS Yeovilton)/ LS(AWT) Kerry Parnell (HMS St Albans).

With the Navy winning the first four singles after lunch and a further two halved matches, a convincing win was sealed.

On the final day, by gaining a half point more against the Army than the RAF did, the Navy were in a position of having to halve the match at worst to retain the title.

The morning foursomes produced an encouraging 2½-1½ advantage with wins coming from Kavanagh/Bull and Hulston/Garton and a half by Tubbs and Wade. While not counting chickens, team captain Lt Cdr Debra Vout (Navy Command) was becoming more confident although even she did not foresee the dramatic finish that was to unfold.

Following wins by Bull, Hulston and Briggs, all but one game was completed and the Navy were still half a point short. Kerry Parnell stood on the 18th tee, a difficult, long par three, all square with her opponent.

They matched each other shotfor-shot and with the RAF player making a certain four it was left to Kerry to try to hole a six-point putt for the Inter-Services title.

The fact that she was fully aware of the situation makes it even more commendable that she held her nerve and calmly walked up to knock it in.

As the ball disappeared dark blue celebrations began while light blue commiseration were very evident. For the second year in a row, the RN ladies had defied the odds for a magnificent victory with the additional half point against the Army proving significant in the count back.

Meanwhile, the men faced the same RAF opposition and their morning and afternoon performances were virtually reversed from the game against the Army. A 3-2 foursomes advantage was attained with excellent wins from Gilbert/Thomas, Baker/McCathie and LPT Mike Setterfield partnered by LAEM Jamie Lown (Sultan).

The result was very close to being even better with Herdman, partnered by RN veteran Cdr Ian Yuill (AFPAA Centurion), fighting back from two down with three to play with two excellent birdies only to be scuppered by a long RAF putt on the final green.

However this was where the good news came to a halt. Apart from Gilbert, who recorded an even more decisive win against the RAF champion, and Yuill, who achieved a creditable half at the end of the field, all other matches were lost. The RAF thus ran out winners by $10\frac{1}{2}-4\frac{1}{2}$ and – with it the Inter-Service championship.

The ladies complete their season with an overseas tour to Virginia, USA, just reward for an excellent win, while the men are left licking their wounds and with much to ponder for next season.

Any lady golfers who are interested in bolstering the team should contact ladies secretary, Lt Cdr Debra Vout, on 93832 3521 while men with handicaps of five or better should call 9380 27880.

Super sub grabs Royals' winner

WELCOME to the first Onside of the new season. We'll begin with the Inter-Command final where super sub Mne Michael Sheldon (45 Cdo) secured a 3-2 victory for the Royal Marines against Portsmouth in a nail-biting final at Victory Stadium.

Spectators – including a number of high-ranking officers – witnessed the Royals defeat a determined Portsmouth Command side in extra time. The game got off to an exciting start when the Royals opened the scoring on two minutes after Mne Shea Saunders beat Pompey keeper LPT Matt Shortt from a narrow angle.

This was the wake up call that Portsmouth needed and within five minutes Portsmouth captain PO Phil Archibald leveled the scores from the penalty spot after he had been brought down just inside the area.

Saunders continued to be a threat and in the 25th minute hit a rasping volley from 20 yards which rattled the post and came back in to play only to be cleared before any RM player had a chance to follow up. On 33 minutes the Royals regained the lead when they were awarded a spot kick. Cpl Si Bochenski converted, sending Shortt the wrong way.

The second half saw Portsmouth put the Royal Marines goal under pressure, eventually getting back on level terms when ET Gerald Joseph broke down the left hand side before firing a low drive into the far corner of the net.

Both teams began to tire understandably in extra-time – but the fresh-legged Sheldon stabbed the ball home from close range when Portsmouth failed to clear a corner.

Portsmouth's endeavors to take the game to a penalty shoot-out were in vain and the Royals hung on to claim the cup from Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey, Vice President RNFA.

Meanwhile, the RN women started their season with an emphatic 3-0 win over Moneyfield Ladies on a wet and breezy evening at Victory Stadium.

With a number of new faces in the squad, they gave a confident and competent display to dominate what was a tough opener to the season.

Goals from Sam Covey, Shannon Meadows and Helen Potter gave newly-appointed ladies manager, C/Sgt Mark Newey an insight of things to come for the remainder of the season.

The RN veterans entertained a very strong Havant & Waterlooville vets side in Portsmouth.

The Navy got off to the better start but fell behind after 15 minutes to a breakaway goal. They came close to levelling the score on 20 minutes when a strike by Lt Fraser Quirke sailed just over the bar.

Havant doubled their lead one minute later when an excellent passing move split the Navy defence and the

goalkeeper was beaten easily.

Two more goals came in quick succession and Havant went in at the break 4–0 up.

With only five minutes elapsed in the second half, Havant pulled further ahead. The Navy did manage to find the back of the net to reduce the difference by one but it was not long before Havant bagged another two goals through defensive errors.

The RN didn't give up the fight and managed to reduce the deficit with two more goals, 7-3 at the final whistle.

Two massive football fixtures loom on the charitable front: the RNFA has been invited to play against a select RAF-Army side on Monday November 23... at Wembley.

The game, refereed by Premiership man in black David Ellery, aims to raise thousands of pounds for the Bobby Moore Fund, set up to research bowel cancer, the disease which killed the England 1966 World Cup winning skipper.

Tickets for the unique match (kick-off 2pm) are £10, available from the RNFA at www.royalnavyfa.com or by contacting their offices at Temeraire.

Eleven days before that, RNFA stalwarts will be in action at Reading's Madejski Stadium for another one-off encounter.

The Heroes Cup on Thursday November 12 pits England against the Rest of the World in aid of Help for Heroes.

Both squads are a mix of celebrities, football legends and sports stars - Gazza, Andrew Cole, Angus Deayton, Darren Gough, Lothar Matthäus, Toto Schillachi, Ally McCoist and Iwan Thomas among them - plus serving personnel

In a career spanning 23 years, Steve Johnson has earned a record 233 appearances for the RN representative side. He'll be taking to the field for England, while another Navy Steve (O'Neil) lines up for the Rest of the World. The Celtic and Scotland fan has more than 150 RN and 60 Combined Services caps under his belt.

"This is an absolute honour for me to be treading the same turf as Gazza and Peter Beardsley," said the Englishman. "Although I'm a Sunderland fan, those two are true legends of world football and its going to be a privilege to be in the same England team as them."

The Heroes Cup kicks off at 7.45pm. Tickets are £10 (adults) and £5 (children) from 0844 249 1871 or www.readingfc.co.uk. The match will be screened live on ITV4.



Surfers help war veterans

THE RN/RM Surf Association supported and assisted a war veterans surf camp at Gwithian Beach, near Hayle in Cornwall.

The idea was developed in the US to assist recovery for PTSD sufferers and amputees through surfing.

It was developed in the UK by ex-soldier and local surf instructor Richard Emerson suffering from PTSD; he's assisted the association on many beginners' weekends.

on many beginners' weekends.

The surf camp was a great success, only made possible by the support of the Royal British

as association members.

The veterans came away from

Legion, Sunset Surf Café as well

the weekend expressing a great deal of gratitude for having had the experience of surfing – a sport they never thought they would ever take part in.

The aim now is to turn it into an annual event with tri-Service support.

More details from Lt Bungy Williams, general secretary RN/ RM Surf Association at MASF HQ on 93781 6773 or email MASF-AV2.



Title beyond Brothers

Continued from page 52 a slender 6-2 lead at the break.

Ten minutes after the re-start the home side were back level with a try from winger Wilson Tulakepa.

The Army responded with a try of their own and so as the match approached the final ten minutes the Army looked on course for the win.

However, RN debutant Ben Taylor joined the attack on the RN right and in front of the barmy army scored the try to even up the scores again.

The final ten minutes were quite frantic with both sides striving for the win but it was the 'Brothers' who got the vital score.

On the last tackle skipper Danny Johnson took the ball at first receiver and flicked it back to stand-off Dane Smallbone who slotted the drop goal which proved to be the winning score. It was a thrilling end to a mighty tussle between two sides who, as ever, put their bodies on the line for the cause.

The following night, HMS Nelson hosted the players' awards dinner with RNRL president Capt Steve Murdoch presenting the trophies to the following stars: Man of Steel - Silivenusi Buinimasi; Most Valuable Contribution - Danny Johnson; Academy Player of the Year – Ben Taylor; Ladies Player of the Year -Sara Simms; Young Player of the Year - Wilson Tulakepa; Ladies Young Player of the Year – Zoe Waring; Kia Kaha (Maori for 'stand strong') Award – Richard Sharp RM.

Satans, Scimitars, Hyenas, B52s... and matelots

THE Royal Navy ice hockey team returned to the ice for the 2009-2010 season, eager to expand their fixture schedule against Service and civilian teams to ensure the sport continues to grow in popularity.

The first run out for RN skaters was at Sheffield when five of the RN's best players were selected to play for the Combined Services squad against the recently-promoted Sheffield Scimitars of the English Premier League for a charity match.

It is hoped that the game will be used as a springboard for many other CS fixtures and help develop the standard of play within the Forces and providing an outlet for the best and most talented players to excel.

The 18-0 final score, although one-sided and reasonably expected, did not take away from the

Help Battle Back

A NAVY volunteer is needed to

help nurture the MOD's Battle

Battle Back was set up last year

with the aim of rehabilitating and

re-integrating injured Servicemen

To oversee this initiative, the

Sport Association was established

through sport and adventurous

Combined Services Adaptive

in September and is forming a

The RN has been asked to

committee of volunteers who

will undertake the work as a

help find a secretary for the

to someone with staff officer

association, a post best suited

experience at SO2/SO1 level.

If you believe that you could

undertake these duties and make

a real contribution to sport for

Navy Sport on 9380 23995 or

adnpts@fleetfost.mod.uk or

Temeraire-SO1NSR.

disabled personnel, contact SO1

secondary duty.

Back sporting initiative for

disabled Service personnel.

training.

fact that the Service team impressed both their professional opponents and the 1,000 strong crowd at Sheffield Ice with their standard of play and determination.

The first game for the RN saw the team travel to Slough to take on regular rivals the Satans.

In a high-scoring game with lots of space to manoeuvre, the Navy and Slough teams would exchange goals for the first two periods before the RN finally broke away in the third period to score a 13-10 win.

The next game saw the Senior Service entertain the Basingstoke Hyenas at home at Planet Ice Gosport.

The small Gosport rink would make the game a close affair with the RN eventually edging the visitors 6-5 at the final buzzer.

Finally, the squad travelled to the John Nike

Leisure Centre in Bracknell to take on the B52s in what was considered the biggest test so far for the sailors and marines. In a sound defensive effort that saw many of the lessons learnt during training put into practice, the RN shut out their hosts for a well deserved 4-0 win.

The Basingstoke and Bracknell sides deserve special mention for the loan of a net minder when Service commitments prevented the regular RN keepers from playing.

That highlights the need for fresh RN talent, so players interested in joining should visit www.rniha.org.uk. Beginners are welcome and there is some, although limited, kit available for loan. The team trains in Gosport twice a month with dates and times listed on the RNIHA website.



Big fish in a big pond

THIS is the biggest fish bagged at the RNRMAA carp championships - a 28lb 6oz mirror carp plucked from the waters of the Celtic Lakes Resort by PO(Phot) Sean Clee (he's the one in the green T-shirt...).

Sixteen Senior Service anglers headed to the resort near Lampeter for a weekend of top rod-dangling-action in the 17-acre lake.

Carp angling matches involve the use of two rods per competitor for 48 hours on the bank.

Electronic bite alarms are part of the modern carp angler's armoury as well as state-of-the-art rods, reels and bivvies.

The heaviest total weight of carp banked is deemed to be the

Other species are often caught but don't count towards the match... as LMA Ed Kennington (Nelson) found when he reeled in

a 16lb catfish.

For the third year running the Royal Marines took the top prize, a trophy and a week's fishing at the awesome Moulicent Lake in France.

his first competitive event led the way with an outstanding 12 fish for a total of 162lb 6oz, followed by AET 'Julie' Andrews (815 NAS) with nine fish for 92lbs.

Mne Davie Hearns (29 Cdo) in

Despite the unseasonably warm weather a grand total of 70 carp were banked with a total weight of nearly 630lbs.

The carp section runs five matches a year to earn points towards selection for an RN/RM representative team to compete against the Army and RAF.

Top points scorer for 2009 was CPO Tim Broughton (815 NAS) with 77 points from an available

Further details on the sport from PO Si Baker on 93781 7890 or visit rnandrmaa.org.uk.



TALKING of Seans lifting big weights...

PO(PT) Sean Cole is chuffed having huffed and puffed to gold in the World Single-lift Powerlifting Championships in Bradford.

Sean, a regular in these pages over the past couple of years, was up against 80 strongmen from 15 nations.

He won with a lift of 242.5 kg. And his superior power-to-weight ratio meant he was also named 'best lifter'.

The senior rate, normally found in HMS Nelson's gym, had expected to do well and set his sights on beating the world record of 247.5kg - but a back injury hampered his preparations.

"What meant the most was winning best lifter title as this pits you against athletes in every weight category, using a formula which takes into account how much you have lifted compared to your bodyweight," said Sean.

He's lifting again this month at the Full Power World Championships in Milton Keynes.

Advance warning

ARTICLES for our January 2010 issue must be received by December 7 to meet our pre-Christmas deadline.



Taking on the world

FOUR RN triathletes were picked to represent Great Britain in their respective age groups at the International Triathlon Union Age Group World Championships on the Gold Coast, about an hour south of Brisbane, Australia.

The four - Capt Ian Hughes (MOD, 50-55 age group), Cdr Rory Bryan (HMS Lancaster, 40-45), Maj Charles Pennington (Navy Command, 30-35) and POMA Mhairi Muir (RNAS Yeovilton, 25-30) - lined up alongside some 3,000 triathletes and

paratriathletes from 44 nations. Each country had sent its best swimmers, cyclists and runners for four days of top-quality multi-sport action.

The Gold Coast is known for its surfing and good weather so it made the perfect venue for such an occasion with the Australian early summer weather ideal for racing.

The water temperature was watched with close scrutiny by every athlete as the readings in the days preceding the race were on the boundary for banning wetsuits during the swim. That would put athletes more used to racing in wetsuits – ie the Brits, as it's extremely rare for the water temperature in open water races to be anywhere near the required level for nonwetsuit swims - at a disadvantage.

The action kicked off with a wetsuit-free 'aquathlon' (21/2km run, 1,000m swim in the sea followed by another 21/2km). Capt Hughes and Cdr Bryan (pictured below powering out of the water) both took part, with the former coming an impressive fourth in his age group and Cdr Bryan achieving 13th.

The sharp end of the action took place over the weekend with over 3000 international athletes taking part in either the Olympic-distance race (1,500m swim, 40km bike ride and 10km run) or the sprint distance race (750m swim, 20km on the bike, 5km on foot).

The RN team acquitted themselves well: Cdr Bryan came sixth in the sprint, POMA Muir achieved 29th in the Olympicdistance race, while Capt Hughes came home in the middle of the pack in the same event despite a mechanical failure during the bike leg.

Disappointingly, Maj Pennington's bid for success was cut short by food poisoning the day before the race.

Undeterred he and the rest of the triathletes have resumed training back in the UK with an eye to competing at the 2010

world championships in Budapest. "Most of us also made the most of watching the elite athletes race, taking inspiration and some tips on how to do better next

year. If only we could all swim, run and bike so fast," said Maj More details on the sport can be found at www.rnrmtri.co.uk and on the age group championships via www.britishtriathlon.



(Isle of) Man of speed

HURTLING past the famous Creg-ny-Baa (Rock of the Cow) pub, motorcyclist PO(AET) Jamie Adam takes to the legendary TT course on the Isle of Man for the first time.

The 846 NAS senior rate – with his Suzuki GSXR 600 liveried in the Jungly's trademark 90s 'zebra stripes' - headed across the Irish Sea to take part in the Manx GP.

The GP takes place on the 37.7-mile course which Tourist Trophy riders have raced around for a century - but is open to amateurs and private entrants rather than professional bikers.

It wasn't just Jamie's first TT, but his first road race and first national event.

The first week of the Manx GP is dedicated to practice sessions - but the weather was so foul that Jamie was only able to complete six laps.

The poor conditions persisted into race week;

the first day was a write-off and the second was severely curtailed, with the newcomers' event restricted to three laps.

The air engineer took ninth place in his class and 11th overall in the wet with an average speed of 103mph. He also picked up a replica trophy for finishing with an average speed within ten per cent of the overall winner.

After a two-day break, the Suzuki was back on the Manx roads for the senior race.

Jamie lined up 70th on the start line (out of 110 racers) then proved his skill by taking 24th place overall, despite very heavy traffic, improving on his newcomers' performance with a lap speed of 106mph – again in the wet.

Sadly this time he missed out on a replica gong (by 1mph) but with two fellow riders he did win the team event.

Martial artists' kendo attitude

THIS year's martial arts Inter-Services were held at RAF Cranwell with organisers looking for the best Combined Services teams to compete against civvies in karate and ITF taekwondo at the annual CS event held in Wales, writes C/Sgt Al Curtin.

With all RN efforts on retaining the dan grade (black belts) overall title for the tenth year in succession and regaining the kup grade (coloured belts) title, the RNRMMAA could not overlook the opportunity of expert taekwondo training under John Harrison 4th Dan WTF(Kukkiwon) – the official RN taekwondo trainer/coach – to keep our fighting skills on top form as the dominant Service in the sport.

The day started excellently for the taekwondo squad: both black and coloured belts won gold in their team sparring events quite convincingly over the other two Services, setting the standard for the whole day.

Afterwards the coloured belts, under the guidance of their captain Cpl 'Lemmy' Mottershead went on to take gold in the patterns competition, plus gold and silver in the individual knockout sparring to take the overall title.

The black belts just lost out to the RAF for the overall Inter-Services title (due to some awful

judging). In karate, the Royal Navy squad fell foul of the operational

tempo, resulting in vastly-reduced

numbers at Cranwell.

The RN/RM were unable to field any junior grades and only three dan grades - Maj Graham Adcock, WO1 Jimmy Mann RM and L/Cpl Bagsy Baker.

The first event was the individual kata where, despite a good showing from all three, none of the squad was placed.

With only two days training together the intrepid trio put on a good display in the team kata, missing out on second place by the narrowest of margins.

Next was the team kumite event where another fine performance saw the three take second place, losing the final to the Army by two bouts to one.

The final event of the first day was the individual kumite.

WO1 Mann and L/Cpl Baker went out in the early rounds, leaving Maj Adcock to fly the flag, eventually losing out in the semi final to the ultimate winner.

The second day saw Maj Adcock entered in the weapons kata competition. With a fine display of iaido (Japanese swordsmanship) he earned a very-creditable 4th place.

Although the squad turn-out was very disappointing, those who did compete represented the Royal Navy with enthusiasm, flair and great sportsmanship, making the weekend a success.

And so to kendo, making its first appearance at the Inter-Services. All three Forces entered teams,

with the RN holding high hopes of doing well thanks to help from sensei Nigel Westaway (3rd Dan) of the Ronin Kai Club in Plymouth to help train the squad.

The kendo team event was first but with the sport new to the RN, there were only three of the requisite five team members available. The Navy and RAF had to combine to make a five-man team, who lost narrowly (3-2) to the Army.

In the kendo individual contest, both RN competitors posted topfive finishes.

Due to the success of the kendo demonstration at the 2009 Inter-Services it will now be a regular feature of the annual contest.

Those interested in taking up the sport should contact Maj Adcock (karate) at: graham. adcock505@mod.uk or 94371 8105; C/Sgt Curtin (taekwondo) alan.curtin438@mod.uk or 93832 8083; and PO 'Taff' Howells (kendo) at taffhowells@ hotmail.co.uk or 9375 65668.

Umpire training

THE RN Cricket Club is running an ECB Level 1 umpires' and scorers' course at Temeraire from February 1-3.

Details from Cdr Nigel Langhorn on 93832 5014/023 9262 5014 or Lt Cdr David Cooke on rnso4@fleetfost.mod. uk or 9380 23741.

Next month



Differently Daring - a year in the life of the wonder warship



Final flight -Fly Navy 100 celebrations reach their climax in Liverpool



Beef encounter, part 1 - a new role for the RN at the Tower

Plus

Beef encounter, part 2 - top RN chefs in culinary challenge







Title beyond Brothers

WITH the newly-formed RN rugby league veterans' side joining the competition for the first time, the Inter-Services now consist of 12 matches spread over three rounds.

RNRL had a mixed bag of results over the series with the seniors surrendering as overall winners to the RAF on points difference as all three Services won their home fixtures, writes WO1 Keith Humpleby.

The academy and ladies sides won their fixtures against the RAF but lost out to the Army, confirming the soldiers' dominance at those respective levels, while the veterans came agonisingly close to one of the biggest upsets in Inter-Services history, only losing out to the Army by a last-minute converted try.

Cranwell hosted the fixtures against the RAF starting with the vets - their first competitive fixture - and although going behind early in the match the 'Older Brothers' salvaged some pride with a great display in the second half, finally going down 35-20.

RNRL ladies provided an action-packed thriller of a match with some great play on both sides but Wrenegades prop Sara Simms had the last word scoring the deciding try in the dying seconds.

The academy had a slightly easier time of things, but the RAF were a much changed and much improved side from the one that was destroyed the week before by the Army.

The final score of 34-8 reflected the RN dominance of the game with half back combination of Greg Pichilingi and Wayne John running things for the Navy.

Another great performance from hooker Johnny Platt earned him the man of the match trophy.

The clash of the Senior teams rounded off the day's events and went the way of the RAF by some margin.

A tense start saw the sides separated by just six points at the 35-minute mark, but crucial scores just before half time handed the initiative over to the RAF.

An out-of-sorts Brothers side went even further behind straight after the break with a flurry of points by the RAF effectively sealing their win.

The last quarter saw the RN recover some pride with tries for



 No quarter given... WO2 Chris Richards RM (sporting a black eye) helps to thwart an RAF attack during a bruising veterans' encounter which the airmen won 35-20 Picture: Sgt Richard Beattie, RAF

Atu Vuniwaqa, Lewis Taylor and James Wagstaffe but it was too late and the RAF finished off their series with what proved to be an unassailable points difference.

The Inter-Services roadshow moved to Burnaby Road the following week for the final round of matches, again with very mixed results for RN supporters

Playing under floodlights, the veterans gave a fantastic performance in a thoroughly entertaining match, leading at one point by 22-8.

The dream was not to be though. With superior strength on the bench the far more experienced Army veterans came back to snatch victory with Lee Innes converting his own try to snatch victory at the death.

Team manager and coach Chris Richards was justifiably proud of his team's efforts in the two matches, confirming the credibility of the fourth team to join the RNRL fold.

The ladies fixture was first up the following day and any hopes of a shock result were soon dashed as an Army side, probably playing their best rugby, took a stranglehold of the game with a superb defensive display which stifled the best efforts of the Wrenegades.

Playing under a very hot sun, the ladies worked hard throughout, but could not contain the Army who won the match convincingly to retain the Inter-Services title.

The academy side had similar problems with their Army counterparts; a lot of effort and quality play was snuffed out by a big strong Army squad which, with another convincing win, also retained the respective title.

Finally the big one - with a big crowd bolstered by a 'barmy army' of trainees from HMS Sultan.

Both sides needed to win and as such both defences had to be at their best. This proved the case with few if any scoring opportunities in

Zapcat racers Commando Spirit (Paul Moxom and Paul Logie) and Contact Wait Out (brothers Paul and Ed Holt) bounce out of the surf at Watergate Bay, Newquay, during the final round of the 2009 championships.

WHAT goes up...

Four RM boats - all with suitable green beret names: State of Mind, Commando Spirit, Contact Wait Out, Go Commando - took part in the weekend's racing, alongside 18 other Zapcats (think soupedup RIB capable of speeds circa 50mph).

The first day's racing ensured that Zapcat 3 crewed by Craig Davis and Rob Martin would take the overall championships, but the King of Surf title was still up for grabs and second and third places were undecided.

Conditions were ideal: crashing waves created the spectacular surf in which the Zapcats thrive.

The Division 2 heats saw State of Mind (Richie Lake and Andy Farmer) get off to a storming start, achieving top scores in their heats to secure a strong place in the final.

Their green beret comrades weren't to be outdone; all four RM boats made the Division 2 final, battling for honours with three non-military racers.

Zapcat 14 - Contact Wait Out - took the lead, pressured by Zapcat 28 for the first three laps until both craft capsized on the fourth run after striking a wave awkwardly

That forced a restart... and State of Mind made the most of it, taking the lead with the other two remaining RM boats hot on their heels. And that's how it finished: State of Mind took gold, Zapcat 42 (Go Commando, Andrew 'H' Harriman and Helen Redwood) with silver and Zapcat 41 (Commando Spirit) earning bronze.

State of Mind were also the best performers over the season, taking sixth place overall. Go Commando were 12th, Commando Spirit 15th - one place ahead of Contact Wait Out.

Continued on page 51

The Senior Service side had the

best initial opportunity but Atu

Vuniwaqa's 50-metre dash to the

line was ruled out for a forward

In fact the only scores of the first

half resulted in the Army enjoying

the first quarter.

Are you a member of the RN and RM and interested in playing ice hockey for the Navy?

Visit our website at www.rniha.org.uk for details on who to contact and how to join this fast growing service sport.

ICE HOCKEY